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The Life and Works of Thomas Paine

Patriots' Edition

Edited by
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THE AMERICAN CRISIS

V.

To General Sir William Howe

PAINE has much fun at the expense of the commander of the British troops in America, General Sir William Howe, to whom he addresses "Crisis V." But while he gibes the titled soldier at some length he devotes several pages to a serious consideration of the military situation, England's financial standing, which he points out, is largely based on paper money, promissory notes and drafts, and the hopelessness of the enemy's efforts to subdue the revolution.

Paine, who saw much of Washington at this time, takes up the matter of counterfeit continental bills, which, he charges, have been forged and uttered with the knowledge and aid of the British commander. Paine denounces the forgery and its abetment by the enemy as an act of meanness foreign to the usage and customs of war. The opening sentence of "Crisis V" is a remarkably fine aphorism, which is much quoted.

TO argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason, and whose philosophy consists in holding humanity in contempt, is like administering medicine to the dead, or endeavoring to convert an atheist by scripture. Enjoy, sir, your insensibility of feeling and reflecting. It is the prerogative of animals. And no man will envy you these honors, in which a savage only can be your rival and a bear your master.

As the generosity of this country rewarded your brother's services in the last war, with an elegant

monument in Westminster Abbey,[1] it is consistent that she should bestow some mark of distinction upon you. You certainly deserve her notice, and a conspicuous place in the catalogue of extraordinary persons. Yet it would be a pity to pass you from the world in state, and consign you to magnificent oblivion among the tombs, without telling the future beholder why. Judas is as much known as John, yet history ascribes their fame to very different actions.

Sir William has undoubtedly merited a monument; but of what kind, or with what inscription, where placed or how embellished, is a question that would puzzle all the heralds of St. James's in the profoundest mood of historical deliberation. We are at no loss, sir, to ascertain your real character, but somewhat perplexed how to perpetuate its identity, and preserve it uninjured from the transformations of time or mistake. A statuary may give a false expression to your bust, or decorate it with some equivocal emblems, by which you may happen to steal into reputation and impose upon the hereafter traditionary world. Ill nature or ridicule may conspire, or a variety of accidents combine to lessen, enlarge, or change Sir Wil-

[1] George Augustus Howe, born 1724, fell at Ticonderoga, July 8, 1758. The General Court of Massachusetts appropriated £250 for the monument in Westminster Abbey.—*Editor.*

liam's fame; and no doubt but he who has taken so much pains to be singular in his conduct, would choose to be just as singular in his exit, his monument and his epitaph.

The usual honors of the dead, to be sure, are not sufficiently sublime to escort a character like you to the republic of dust and ashes; for however men may differ in their ideas of grandeur or of government here, the grave is nevertheless a perfect republic. Death is not the monarch of the dead, but of the dying. The moment he obtains a conquest he loses a subject, and, like the foolish king you serve, will, in the end, war himself out of all his dominions.

As a proper preliminary towards the arrangement of your funeral honors, we readily admit of your new rank of *knighthood*. The title is perfectly in character, and is your own, more by merit than creation. There are knights of various orders, from the knight of the windmill to the knight of the post. The former is your patron for exploits, and the latter will assist you in settling your accounts. No honorary title could be more happily applied! The ingenuity is sublime! And your royal master has discovered more genius in fitting you therewith, than in generating the most finished figure for a button, or descanting on the properties of a button mould.

But how, sir, shall we dispose of you? The invention of a statuary is exhausted, and Sir William is yet unprovided with a monument. America is anxious to bestow her funeral favors upon you, and wishes to do it in a manner that shall distinguish you from all the deceased heroes of the last war. The Egyptian method of embalming is not known to the present age, and hieroglyphical pageantry hath outlived the science of deciphering it. Some other method, therefore, must be thought of to immortalize the new knight of the windmill and post. Sir William, thanks to his stars, is not oppressed with very delicate ideas. He has no ambition of being wrapped up and handed about in myrrh, aloes and cassia. Less expensive odors will suffice; and it fortunately happens that the simple genius of America has discovered the art of preserving bodies, and embellishing them too, with much greater frugality than the ancients. In balmage, sir, of humble tar, you will be as secure as Pharaoh, and in a hieroglyphic of feathers, rival in finery all the mummies of Egypt.

As you have already made your exit from the moral world, and by numberless acts both of passionate and deliberate injustice engraved an "*here lieth*" on your deceased honor, it must be mere affectation in you to pretend concern at the humors or opinions of man-

kind respecting you. What remains of you may expire at any time. The sooner the better. For he who survives his reputation, lives out of despite of himself, like a man listening to his own reproach.

Thus entombed and ornamented, I leave you to the inspection of the curious, and return to the history of your yet surviving actions. The character of Sir William has undergone some extraordinary revolutions since his arrival in America. It is now fixed and known; and we have nothing to hope from your candor or to fear from your capacity. Indolence and inability have too large a share in your composition, ever to suffer you to be anything more than the hero of little villainies and unfinished adventures. That, which to some persons appeared moderation in you at first, was not produced by any real virtue of your own, but by a contrast of passions, dividing and holding you in perpetual irresolution. One vice will frequently expel another, without the least merit in the man; as powers in contrary directions reduce each other to rest.

It became you to have supported a dignified solemnity of character; to have shown a superior liberality of soul; to have won respect by an obstinate perseverance in maintaining order, and to have exhibited on all occasions such an unchangeable graciousness of

conduct, that while we beheld in you the resolution of an enemy, we might admire in you the sincerity of a man. You came to America under the high sounding titles of commander and commissioner; not only to suppress what you call rebellion, by arms, but to shame it out of countenance by the excellence of your example. Instead of which, you have been the patron of low and vulgar frauds, the encourager of Indian cruelties; and have imported a cargo of vices blacker than those which you pretend to suppress.

Mankind are not universally agreed in their determination of right and wrong; but there are certain actions which the consent of all nations and individuals has branded with the unchangeable name of *meanness*. In the list of human vices we find some of such a refined constitution, they cannot be carried into practice without seducing some virtue to their assistance; but *meanness* has neither alliance nor apology. It is generated in the dust and sweepings of other vices, and is of such a hateful figure that all the rest conspire to disown it. Sir William, the commissioner of George the Third, has at last vouchsafed to give it rank and pedigree. He has placed the fugitive at the council board, and dubbed it companion of the order of knighthood.

The particular act of meanness which I allude to in this description, is forgery. You, sir, have abetted and patronized the forging and uttering counterfeit continental bills. In the same New York newspapers in which your own proclamation under your master's authority was published, offering, or pretending to offer, pardon and protection to these states, there were repeated advertisements of counterfeit money for sale, and persons who have come officially from you, and under the sanction of your flag, have been taken up in attempting to put them off.

A conduct so basely mean in a public character is without precedent or pretence. Every nation on earth, whether friends or enemies, will unite in despising you. 'Tis an incendiary war upon society, which nothing can excuse or palliate,—an improvement upon beggarly villany—and shows an inbred wretchedness of heart made up between the venomous malignity of a serpent and the spiteful imbecility of an inferior reptile.

The laws of any civilized country would condemn you to the gibbet without regard to your rank or titles, because it is an action foreign to the usage and custom of war; and should you fall into our hands, which pray God you may, it will be a doubtful matter

whether we are to consider you as a military prisoner or a prisoner for felony.

Besides, it is exceedingly unwise and impolitic in you, or any other persons in the English service, to promote or even encourage, or wink at the crime of forgery, in any case whatever. Because, as the riches of England, as a nation, are chiefly in paper, and the far greater part of trade among individuals is carried on by the same medium, that is, by notes and drafts on one another, they, therefore, of all people in the world, ought to endeavor to keep forgery out of sight, and, if possible, not to revive the idea of it. It is dangerous to make men familiar with a crime which they may afterwards practise to much greater advantage against those who first taught them. Several officers in the English army have made their exit at the gallows for forgery on their agents; for we all know, who know any thing of England, that there is not a more necessitous body of men, taking them generally, than what the English officers are. They contrive to make a show at the expense of the tailors, and appear clean at the charge of the washer-women.

England, has at this time, nearly two hundred million pounds sterling of public money in paper, for which she has no real property: besides a large circulation of bank notes, bank post bills, and promis-

sory notes and drafts of private bankers, merchants and tradesmen. She has the greatest quantity of paper currency and the least quantity of gold and silver of any nation in Europe; the real specie, which is about sixteen millions sterling, serves only as change in large sums, which are always made in paper, or for payment in small ones. Thus circumstanced, the nation is put to its wit's end, and obliged to be severe almost to criminality, to prevent the practice and growth of forgery. Scarcely a session passes at the Old Bailey, or an execution at Tyburn, but witnesses this truth, yet you, sir, regardless of the policy which her necessity obliges her to adopt, have made your whole army intimate with the crime. And as all armies at the conclusion of a war, are too apt to carry into practice the vices of the campaign, it will probably happen, that England will hereafter abound in forgeries, to which art the practitioners were first initiated under your authority in America. You, sir, have the honor of adding a new vice to the military catalogue; and the reason, perhaps, why the invention was reserved for you, is, because no general before was mean enough even to think of it.

That a man whose soul is absorbed in the low traffic of vulgar vice, is incapable of moving in any superior region, is clearly shown in you by the event of every

campaign. Your military exploits have been without plan, object or decision. Can it be possible that you or your employers suppose that the possession of Philadelphia will be any ways equal to the expense or expectation of the nation which supports you? What advantages does England derive from any achievements of yours? To *her* it is perfectly indifferent what place you are in, so long as the business of conquest is unperformed and the charge of maintaining you remains the same.

If the principal events of the three campaigns be attended to, the balance will appear against you at the close of each; but the last, in point of importance to us, has exceeded the former two. It is pleasant to look back on dangers past, and equally as pleasant to meditate on present ones when the way out begins to appear. That period is now arrived, and the long doubtful winter of war is changing to the sweeter prospects of victory and joy. At the close of the campaign, in 1775, you were obliged to retreat from Boston. In the summer of 1776, you appeared with a numerous fleet and army in the harbor of New York. By what miracle the continent was preserved in that season of danger is a subject of admiration! If instead of wasting your time against Long Island you had run up the North River, and landed any where

above New York, the consequence must have been, that either you would have compelled General Washington to fight you with very unequal numbers, or he must have suddenly evacuated the city with the loss of nearly all the stores of his army, or have surrendered for want of provisions; the situation of the place naturally producing one or the other of these events.

The preparations made to defend New York were, nevertheless, wise and military; because your forces were then at sea, their numbers uncertain; storms, sickness, or a variety of accidents might have disabled their coming, or so diminished them on their passage, that those which survived would have been incapable of opening the campaign with any prospect of success; in which case the defence would have been sufficient and the place preserved; for cities that have been raised from nothing with an infinitude of labor and expense, are not to be thrown away on the bare probability of their being taken. On these grounds the preparations made to maintain New York were as judicious as the retreat afterwards. While you, in the interim, let slip the *very* opportunity which seemed to put conquest in your power.

Through the whole of that campaign you had nearly double the forces which General Washington

immediately commanded. The principal plan at that time, on our part, was to wear away the season with as little loss as possible, and to raise the army for the next year. Long Island, New York, Forts Washington and Lee were not defended after your superior force was known under any expectation of their being finally maintained, but as a range of outworks, in the attacking of which your time might be wasted, your numbers reduced, and your vanity amused by possessing them on our retreat. It was intended to have withdrawn the garrison from Fort Washington after it had answered the former of those purposes, but the fate of that day put a prize into your hands without much honor to yourselves.

Your progress through the Jerseys was accidental; you had it not even in contemplation, or you would not have sent a principal part of your forces to Rhode Island beforehand. The utmost hope of America in the year 1776, reached no higher than that she might not then be conquered. She had no expectation of defeating you in that campaign. Even the most cowardly Tory allowed, that, could she withstand the shock of *that* summer, her independence would be past a doubt. You had *then* greatly the advantage of her. You were formidable. Your military knowledge was supposed to be complete. Your fleets and

forces arrived without an accident. You had neither experience nor reinforcements to wait for. You had nothing to do but to begin, and your chance lay in the first vigorous onset.

America was young and unskilled. She was obliged to trust her defence to time and practice; and has, by mere dint of perseverance, maintained her cause, and brought the enemy to a condition, in which she is now capable of meeting him on any grounds.

It is remarkable that in the campaign of 1776 you gained no more, notwithstanding your great force, than what was given you by consent of evacuation, except Fort Washington; while every advantage obtained by us was by fair and hard fighting. The defeat of Sir Peter Parker was complete.[1] The conquest of the Hessians at Trenton, by the remains of a retreating army, which but a few days before you affected to despise, is an instance of their heroic perseverance very seldom to be met with. And the victory over the British troops at Princeton, by a harassed and wearied party, who had been engaged the day before and marched all night without refreshment, is attended with such a scene of circumstances and superiority of generalship, as will ever give it a place in the first rank in the history of great actions.

[1] At Cape Fear, April, 1776.—*Editor.*

When I look back on the gloomy days of last winter, and see America suspended by a thread, I feel a triumph of joy at the recollection of her delivery, and a reverence for the characters which snatched her from destruction. To doubt *now* would be a species of infidelity, and to forget the instruments which saved us *then* would be ingratitude.

The close of that campaign left us with the spirit of conquerors. The northern districts were relieved by the retreat of General Carleton over the lakes. The army under your command were hunted back and had their bounds prescribed. The continent began to feel its military importance, and the winter passed pleasantly away in preparations for the next campaign.

However confident you might be on your first arrival, the result of the year 1776 gave you some idea of the difficulty, if not impossibility of conquest. To this reason I ascribe your delay in opening the campaign of 1777. The face of matters, on the close of the former year, gave you no encouragement to pursue a discretionary war as soon as the spring admitted the taking the field; for though conquest, in that case, would have given you a double portion of fame, yet the experiment was too hazardous. The ministry, had you failed, would have shifted the whole blame upon you, charged you with having acted without

orders, and condemned at once both your plan and execution.

To avoid the misfortunes, which might have involved you and your money accounts in perplexity and suspicion, you prudently waited the arrival of a plan of operations from England, which was that you should proceed for Philadelphia by way of the Chesapeake, and that Burgoyne, after reducing Ticonderoga, should take his route by Albany, and, if necessary, join you.

The splendid laurels of the last campaign have flourished in the north. In that quarter America has surprised the world, and laid the foundation of this year's glory. The conquest of Ticonderoga, (if it may be called a conquest) has, like all your other victories, led on to ruin. Even the provisions taken in that fortress (which by General Burgoyne's return was sufficient in bread and flour for nearly 5000 men for ten weeks, and in beef and pork for the same number of men for one month) served only to hasten his overthrow, by enabling him to proceed to Saratoga, the place of his destruction. A short review of the operations of the last campaign will show the condition of affairs on both sides.

You have taken Ticonderoga and marched into Philadelphia. These are all the events which the

year has produced on your part. A trifling campaign indeed, compared with the expenses of England and the conquest of the continent. On the other side, a considerable part of your northern force has been routed by the New York militia under General Herkemer. Fort Stanwix has bravely survived a compound attack of soldiers and savages, and the besiegers have fled. The Battle of Bennington has put a thousand prisoners into our hands, with all their arms, stores, artillery and baggage. General Burgoyne, in two engagements, has been defeated; himself, his army, and all that were his and theirs are now ours. Ticonderoga and Independence [forts] are retaken, and not the shadow of an enemy remains in all the northern districts. At this instant we have upwards of eleven thousand prisoners, between sixty and seventy [captured] pieces of brass ordnance, besides small arms, tents, stores, etc.

In order to know the real value of those advantages, we must reverse the scene, and suppose General Gates and the force he commanded to be at your mercy as prisoners, and General Burgoyne, with his army of soldiers and savages, to be already joined to you in Pennsylvania. So dismal a picture can scarcely be looked at. It has all the tracings and colorings of horror and despair; and excites the most swelling

emotions of gratitude by exhibiting the miseries we are so graciously preserved from.

I admire the distribution of laurels around the continent. It is the earnest of future union. South Carolina has had her day of sufferings and of fame; and the other southern States have exerted themselves in proportion to the force that invaded or insulted them. Towards the close of the campaign, in 1776, these middle States were called upon and did their duty nobly. They were witnesses to the almost expiring flame of human freedom. It was the close struggle of life and death, the line of invisible division; and on which the unabated fortitude of a Washington prevailed, and saved the spark that has since blazed in the north with unrivalled lustre.

Let me ask, sir, what great exploits have you performed? Through all the variety of changes and opportunities which the war has produced, I know no one action of yours that can be styled masterly. You have moved in and out, backward and forward, round and round, as if valor consisted in a military jig. The history and figure of your movements would be truly ridiculous could they be justly delineated. They resemble the labors of a puppy pursuing his tail; the end is still at the same distance, and all the turnings round must be done over again.

The first appearance of affairs at Ticonderoga wore such an unpromising aspect, that it was necessary, in July, to detach a part of the forces to the support of that quarter, which were otherwise destined or intended to act against you; and this, perhaps, has been the means of postponing your downfall to another campaign. The destruction of one army at a time is work enough. We know, sir, what we are about, what we have to do, and how to do it.

Your progress from the Chesapeake, was marked by no capital stroke of policy or heroism. Your principal aim was to get General Washington between the Delaware and Schuylkill, and between Philadelphia and your army. In that situation, with a river on each of his flanks, which united about five miles below the city, and your army above him, you could have intercepted his reinforcements and supplies, cut off all his communication with the country, and, if necessary, have despatched assistance to open a passage for General Burgoyne. This scheme was too visible to succeed: for had General Washington suffered you to command the open country above him, I think it a very reasonable conjecture that the conquest of Burgoyne would not have taken place, because you could, in that case, have relieved him. It was therefore necessary, while that important victory was in sus-

pense, to trepan *you* into a situation in which you could only be on the defensive, without the power of affording him assistance. The manœuvre had its effect, and Burgoyne was conquered.[1]

There has been something unmilitary and passive in you from the time of your passing the Schuylkill and getting possession of Philadelphia, to the close of the campaign. You mistook a trap for a conquest, the probability of which had been made known to Europe, and the edge of your triumph taken off by our own information long before.

Having got you into this situation, a scheme for a general attack upon you at Germantown was carried into execution on the 4th of October, and though the success was not equal to the excellence of the plan, yet the attempting it proved the genius of America to be on the rise, and her power approaching to superiority. The obscurity of the morning was your best friend, for a fog is always favorable to a hunted enemy. Some weeks after this you likewise planned an attack on General Washington while at Whitemarsh. You marched out with infinite parade, but on finding him preparing to attack you next morn-

[1] Paine did Washington a good service in crediting him with participation in the capture of Burgoyne. Gates' victory at Saratoga had made that general such a hero that a plan was on foot to give him Washington's place as Commander-in-Chief.—*Editor.*

ing, you prudently turned about, and retreated to Philadelphia with all the precipitation of a man conquered in imagination.

Immediately after the battle of Germantown, the probability of Burgoyne's defeat gave a new policy to affairs in Pennsylvania, and it was judged most consistent with the general safety of America, to wait the issue of the northern campaign. Slow and sure is sound work. The news of that victory arrived in our camp on the 18th of October, and no sooner did that shout of joy, and the report of the thirteen cannon reach your ears, than you resolved upon a retreat, and the next day, that is, on the 19th, you withdrew your drooping army into Philadelphia. This movement was evidently dictated by fear; and carried with it a positive confession that you dreaded a second attack. It was hiding yourself among women and children, and sleeping away the choicest part of the campaign in expensive inactivity. An army in a city can never be a conquering army. The situation admits only of defence. It is mere shelter: and every military power in Europe will conclude you to be eventually defeated.

The time when you made this retreat was the very time you ought to have fought a battle, in order to put yourself in condition of recovering in Pennsyl-

vania what you had lost in Saratoga. And the reason why you did not, must be either prudence or cowardice; the former supposes your inability, and the latter needs no explanation. I draw no conclusions, sir, but such as are naturally deduced from known and visible facts, and such as will always have a being while the facts which produced them remain unaltered.

After this retreat a new difficulty arose which exhibited the power of Britain in a very contemptible light; which was the attack and defence of Mud Island. For several weeks did that little unfinished fortress stand out against all the attempts of Admiral and General Howe. It was the fable of Bender realized on the Delaware. Scheme after scheme, and force upon force were tried and defeated. The garrison, with scarce anything to cover them but their bravery, survived in the midst of mud, shot and shells, and were at last obliged to give it up more to the powers of time and gunpowder than to military superiority of the besiegers.[1]

It is my sincere opinion that matters are in much worse condition with you than what is generally known. Your master's speech at the opening of Par-

[1] Paine was himself a participant in the affair at Mud Island. See his letter to Franklin in Paris.—*Editor.*

liament, is like a soliloquy on ill luck. It shows him to be coming a little to his reason, for sense of pain is the first symptom of recovery, in profound stupefaction. His condition is deplorable. He is obliged to submit to all the insults of France and Spain, without daring to know or resent them; and thankful for the most trivial evasions to the most humble remonstrances. The time *was* when he could not deign an answer to a petition from America, and the time now *is* when he dare not give an answer to an affront from France. The capture of Burgoyne's army will sink his consequence as much in Europe as in America. In his speech he expresses his suspicions at the warlike preparations of France and Spain, and as he has only the one army which you command to support his character in the world with, it remains very uncertain when, or in what quarter it will be most wanted, or can be best employed; and this will partly account for the great care you take to keep it from action and attacks, for should Burgoyne's fate be yours, which it probably will, England may take her endless farewell not only of all America but of all the West Indies.

Never did a nation invite destruction upon itself with the eagerness and the ignorance with which Britain has done. Bent upon the ruin of a young and

unoffending country, she has drawn the sword that has wounded herself to the heart, and in the agony of her resentment has applied a poison for a cure. Her conduct towards America is a compound of rage and lunacy; she aims at the government of it, yet preserves neither dignity nor character in her methods to obtain it. Were government a mere manufacture or article of commerce, immaterial by whom it should be made or sold, we might as well employ her as another, but when we consider it as the fountain from whence the general manners and morality of a country take their rise, that the persons entrusted with the execution thereof are by their serious example an authority to support these principles, how abominably absurd is the idea of being hereafter governed by a set of men who have been guilty of forgery, perjury, treachery, theft and every species of villany which the lowest wretches on earth could practise or invent. What greater public curse can befall any country than to be under such authority, and what greater blessing than to be delivered therefrom. The soul of any man of sentiment would rise in brave rebellion against them, and spurn them from the earth.

The malignant and venomous tempered General Vaughan has amused his savage fancy in burning the

whole town of Kingston, in York government, and the late governor of that state, Mr. Tryon, in his letter to General Parsons, has endeavored to justify it and declared his wish to burn the houses of every committeeman in the country.[1] Such a confession from one who was once intrusted with the powers of civil government, is a reproach to the character. But it is the wish and the declaration of a man whom anguish and disappointment have driven to despair, and who is daily decaying into the grave with constitutional rottenness.

There is not in the compass of language a sufficiency of words to express the baseness of your king, his ministry and his army. They have refined upon villany till it wants a name. To the fiercer vices of former ages they have added the dregs and scummings of the most finished rascality, and are so completely sunk in serpentine deceit, that there is not left among them *one* generous enemy.

From such men and such masters, may the gracious hand of Heaven preserve America! And though the sufferings she now endures are heavy, and severe,

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[1] General Vaughan was with Cornwallis at Cape Fear. Tryon was Governor in North Carolina at the beginning of hostilities. He was later transferred to New York, carrying with him a reputation for cruelty.—*Editor.*

they are like straws in the wind compared to the weight of evils she would feel under the government of your king, and his pensioned Parliament.

There is something in meanness which excites a species of resentment that never subsides, and something in cruelty which stirs up the heart to the highest agony of human hatred; Britain has filled up both these characters till no addition can be made, and has not reputation left with us to obtain credit for the slightest promise. The will of God has parted us, and the deed is registered for eternity. When she shall be a spot scarcely visible among the nations, America shall flourish the favorite of heaven, and the friend of mankind.

For the domestic happiness of Britain and the peace of the world, I wish she had not a foot of land but what is circumscribed within her own island. Extent of dominion has been her ruin, and instead of civilizing others has brutalized herself. Her late reduction of India, under Clive and his successors, was not so properly a conquest as an extermination of mankind. She is the only power who could practise the prodigal barbarity of tying men to mouths of loaded cannon and blowing them away. It happens that General Burgoyne, who made the report of that horrid transaction, in the House of Commons,

is now a prisoner with us, and though an enemy, I can appeal to him for the truth of it, being confident that he neither can nor will deny it. Yet Clive received the approbation of the last Parliament.

When we take a survey of mankind, we cannot help cursing the wretch, who, to the unavoidable misfortunes of nature, shall wilfully add the calamities of war. One would think there were evils enough in the world without studying to increase them, and that life is sufficiently short without shaking the sand that measures it. The histories of Alexander, and Charles of Sweden, are the histories of human devils; a good man cannot think of their actions without abhorrence, nor of their deaths without rejoicing. To see the bounties of heaven destroyed, the beautiful face of nature laid waste, and the choicest works of creation and art tumbled into ruin, would fetch a curse from the soul of piety itself. But in this country the aggravation is heightened by a new combination of affecting circumstances. America was young, and, compared with other countries, was virtuous. None but a Herod of uncommon malice would have made war upon infancy and innocence: and none but a people of the most finished fortitude, dared under those circumstances, have resisted the tyranny. The natives, or their ancestors, had fled

from the former oppressions of England, and with the industry of bees had changed a wilderness into a habitable world. To Britain they were indebted for nothing. The country was the gift of heaven, and God alone is their Lord and Sovereign.

The time, sir, will come when you, in a melancholy hour, shall reckon up your miseries by your murders in America. Life, with you, begins to wear a clouded aspect. The vision of pleasurable delusion is wearing away, and changing to the barren wild of age and sorrow. The poor reflection of having served your king will yield you no consolation in your parting moments. He will crumble to the same undistinguished ashes with yourself, and have sins enough of his own to answer for. It is not the farcical benedictions of a bishop, nor the cringing hypocrisy of a court of chaplains, nor the formality of an act of Parliament, that can change guilt into innocence, or make the punishment one pang the less. You may, perhaps, be unwilling to be serious, but this destruction of the goods of Providence, this havoc of the human race, and this sowing the world with mischief, must be accounted for to him who made and governs it. To us they are only present sufferings, but to him they are deep rebellions.

If there is a sin superior to every other, it is that of wilful and offensive war. Most other sins are circumscribed within narrow limits, that is, the power of *one* man cannot give them a very general extension, and many kinds of sins have only a mental existence from which no infection arises; but he who is the author of a war, lets loose the whole contagion of hell, and opens a vein that bleeds a nation to death. We leave it to England and Indians to boast of these honors; we feel no thirst for such savage glory; a nobler flame, a purer spirit animates America. She has taken up the sword of virtuous defence; she has bravely put herself between Tyranny and Freedom, between a curse and a blessing, determined to expel the one and protect the other.

It is the object only of war that makes it honorable. And if there was ever a *just* war since the world began, it is this in which America is now engaged. She invaded no land of yours. She hired no mercenaries to burn your towns, nor Indians to massacre their inhabitants. She wanted nothing from you, and was indebted for nothing to you: and thus circumstanced, her defence is honorable and her prosperity is certain.

Yet it is not on the *justice* only, but likewise on the *importance* of this cause that I ground my seeming enthusiastical confidence of our success. The

vast extension of America makes her of too much value in the scale of Providence, to be cast like a pearl before swine, at the feet of an European island; and of much less consequence would it be that Britain were sunk in the sea than that America should miscarry. There has been such a chain of extraordinary events in the discovery of this country at first, in the peopling and planting it afterwards, in the rearing and nursing it to its present state, and in the protection of it through the present war, that no man can doubt, but Providence has some nobler end to accomplish than the gratification of the petty elector of Hanover, or the ignorant and insignificant king of Britain.

As the blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the Christian church, so the political persecutions of England will and have already enriched America with industry, experience, union and importance. Before the present era she was a mere chaos of uncemented colonies, individually exposed to the ravages of the Indians and the invasion of any power that Britain should be at war with. She had nothing that she could call her own. Her felicity depended upon accident. The convulsions of Europe might have thrown her from one conqueror to another, till she had been the slave of all, and ruined by every one; for until

she had spirit enough to become her own master, there was no knowing to which master she should belong. That period, thank God, is past, and she is no longer the dependent, disunited colonies of Britain, but the independent and United States of America, knowing no master but heaven and herself. You, or your king, may call this "delusion," "rebellion," or what name you please. To us it is perfectly indifferent. The issue will determine the character, and time will give it a name as lasting as his own.

You have now, sir, tried the fate of three campaigns, and can fully declare to England, that nothing is to be got on your part, but blows and broken bones, and nothing on hers but waste of trade and credit, and an increase of poverty and taxes. You are now only where you might have been two years ago, without the loss of a single ship, and yet not a step more forward towards the conquest of the continent; because, as I have already hinted, "an army in a city can never be a conquering army." The full amount of your losses, since the beginning of the war, exceeds twenty thousand men, besides millions of treasure, for which you have nothing in exchange. Our expenses, though great, are circulated within ourselves. Yours is a direct sinking of money, and that from both ends at once; first, in hiring troops

out of the nation, and in paying them afterwards, because the money in neither case can return to Britain. We are already in possession of the prize, you only in pursuit of it. To us it is a real treasure, to you it would be only an empty triumph. Our expenses will repay themselves with tenfold interest, while yours entail upon you everlasting poverty.

Take a review, sir, of the ground which you have gone over, and let it teach you policy, if it cannot honesty. You stand but on a very tottering foundation. A change of the ministry in England may probably bring your measures into question, and your head to the block. Clive, with all his successes, had some difficulty in escaping, and yours being all a war of losses, will afford you less pretensions, and your enemies more grounds for impeachment.[1]

Go home, sir, and endeavor to save the remains of your ruined country, by a just representation of the madness of her measures. A few moments, well applied, may yet preserve her from political destruction. I am not one of those who wish to see Europe in a flame, because I am persuaded that such an event will not shorten the war. The rupture, at present, is con-

[1] Succeeded by Sir Henry Clinton in 1778, General Howe returned to England and his military conduct was scrutinized by Parliament; but he was virtually exonerated.—*Editor.*

fined between the two powers of America and England. England finds that she cannot conquer America, and America has no wish to conquer England. You are fighting for what you can never obtain, and we defending what we never mean to part with. A few words, therefore, settle the bargain. Let England mind her own business and we will mind ours. Govern yourselves, and we will govern ourselves. You may then trade where you please unmolested by us, and we will trade where we please unmolested by you; and such articles as we can purchase of each other better than elsewhere may be mutually done. If it were possible that you could carry on the war for twenty years you must still come to this point at last, or worse, and the sooner you think of it the better it will be for you.

My official situation enables me to know the repeated insults which Britain is obliged to put up with from foreign powers, and the wretched shifts that she is driven to, to gloss them over.[1] Her reduced strength and exhausted coffers in a three years' war with America, has given a powerful superiority to France and Spain. She is not now a match for them.

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[1] Paine, elected by Congress, April 17, 1777, Secretary of its Committee of Foreign Affairs, was actually the Secretary of Foreign Affairs.—*Editor.*

But if neither councils can prevail on her to think, nor sufferings awaken her to reason, she must e'en go on, till the honor of England becomes a proverb of contempt, and Europe dub her the Land of Fools.

I am, Sir, with every wish for an honorable peace,

Your friend, enemy, and countryman,

COMMON SENSE.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF AMERICA

WITH all the pleasure with which a man exchanges bad company for good, I take my leave of Sir William and return to you. It is now nearly three years since the tyrrany of Britain received its first repulse by the arms of America. A period which has given birth to a new world, and erected a monument to the folly of the old.

I cannot help being sometimes surprised at the complimentary references which I have seen and heard made to ancient histories and transactions. The wisdom, civil governments, and sense of honor of the states of Greece and Rome, are frequently held up as objects of excellence and imitation. Mankind have lived to very little purpose, if, at this period of the world, they must go two or three thousand

years back for lessons and examples. We do great injustice to ourselves by placing them in such a superior line. We have no just authority for it, neither can we tell why it is that we should suppose ourselves inferior.

Could the mist of antiquity be cleared away, and men and things be viewed as they really were, it is more than probable that they would admire us, rather than we them. America has surmounted a greater variety and combination of difficulties, than, I believe, ever fell to the share of any one people, in the same space of time, and has replenished the world with more useful knowledge and sounder maxims of civil government than were ever produced in any age before. Had it not been for America, there had been no such thing as freedom left throughout the whole universe. England has lost hers in a long chain of right reasoning from wrong principles, and it is from this country, now, that she must learn the resolution to redress herself, and the wisdom how to accomplish it.

The Grecians and Romans were strongly possessed of the *spirit* of liberty but *not the principle*, for at the time that they were determined not to be slaves themselves, they employed their power to enslave the rest of mankind. But this distinguishd era is blotted

by no one misanthropical vice. In short, if the principle on which the cause is founded, the universal blessings that are to arise from it, the difficulties that accompanied it, the wisdom with which it has been debated, the fortitude by which it has been supported, the strength of the power which we had to oppose, and the condition in which we undertook it, be all taken in one view, we may justly style it the most virtuous and illustrious revolution that ever graced the history of mankind.

A good opinion of ourselves is exceedingly necessary in private life, but absolutely necessary in public life, and of the utmost importance in supporting national character. I have no notion of yielding the palm of the United States to any Grecians or Romans that were ever born. We have equalled the bravest in times of danger, and excelled the wisest in construction of civil governments.

From this agreeable eminence let us take a review of present affairs. The spirit of corruption is so inseparably interwoven with British politics, that their ministry suppose all mankind are governed by the same motives. They have no idea of a people submitting even to temporary inconvenience from an attachment to rights and privileges. Their plans of business are calculated *by* the hour and *for* the hour,

and are uniform in nothing but the corruption which gives them birth. They never had, neither have they at this time, any regular plan for the conquest of America by arms. They know not how to go about it, neither have they power to effect it if they did know. The thing is not within the compass of human practicability, for America is too extensive either to be fully conquered or *passively* defended. But she may be *actively* defended by defeating or making prisoners of the army that invades her. And this is the only system of defence that can be effectual in a large country.

There is something in a war carried on by invasion which makes it differ in circumstances from any other mode of war, because he who conducts it cannot tell whether the ground he gains be for him, or against him, when he first obtains it. In the winter of 1776, General Howe marched with an air of victory through the Jerseys, the consequence of which was his defeat; and General Burgoyne at Saratoga experienced the same fate from the same cause. The Spaniards, about two years ago, were defeated by the Algerines in the same manner, that is, their first triumphs became a trap in which they were totally routed. And whoever will attend to the circumstances and events of a war carried on by invasion, will find, that any in-

vader, in order to be finally conquered must first begin to conquer.

I confess myself one of those who believe the loss of Philadelphia to be attended with more advantages than injuries. The case stood thus: The enemy imagined Philadelphia to be of more importance to us than it really was; for we all know that it had long ceased to be a port: not a cargo of goods had been brought into it for near a twelvemonth, nor any fixed manufactories, nor even ship-building, carried on in it; yet as the enemy believed the conquest of it to be practicable, and to that belief added the absurd idea that the soul of all America was centred there, and would be conquered there, it naturally follows that their possession of it, by not answering the end proposed, must break up the plans they had so foolishly gone upon, and either oblige them to form a new one, for which their present strength is not sufficient, or to give over the attempt.

We never had so small an army to fight against, nor so fair an opportunity of final success as *now*. The death wound is already given. The day is ours if we follow it up. The enemy, by his situation, is within our reach, and by his reduced strength is within our power. The ministers of Britain may rage as they please, but our part is to conquer their armies. Let

them wrangle and welcome, but let it not draw our attention from the *one* thing needful. *Here, in this spot* is our own business to be accomplished, our felicity secured. What we have now to do is as clear as light, and the way to do it is as straight as a line. It needs not to be commented upon, yet, in order to be perfectly understood I will put a case that cannot admit of a mistake.

Had the armies under Generals Howe and Burgoyne been united, and taken post at Germantown, and had the northern army under General Gates been joined to that under General Washington, at Whitemarsh, the consequence would have been a general action; and if in that action we had killed and taken the same number of officers and men, that is, between nine and ten thousand, with the same quantity of artillery, arms, stores, etc. as have been taken at the northward, and obliged General Howe with the remains of his army, that is, with the same number he now commands, to take shelter in Philadelphia, we should certainly have thought ourselves the greatest heroes in the world; and should, as soon as the season permitted, have collected together all the force of the continent and laid siege to the city, for it requires a much greater force to besiege an enemy in a town than to defeat him in the field. The case *now*

is just the same as if it had been produced by the means I have here supposed. Between nine and ten thousand have been killed and taken, all their stores are in our possession, and General Howe, in consequence of that victory, has thrown himself for shelter into Philadelphia.[1] He, or his trifling friend Galloway, may form what pretences they please, yet no just reason can be given for their going into winter quarters so early as the 19th of October, but their apprehensions of a defeat if they continued out, or their conscious inability of keeping the field with safety. I see no advantage which can arise to America by hunting the enemy from state to state. It is a triumph without a prize, and wholly unworthy the attention of a people determined to conquer. Neither can any state promise itself security while the enemy remains in a condition to transport themselves from one part of the continent to another. Howe, likewise, cannot conquer where we have no army to oppose, therefore any such removals in him are mean and cowardly, and reduces Britain to a common pilferer. If he retreats from Philadelphia, he will be despised;

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[1] In a private letter to Franklin, in Paris, Paine intimated a probable advantage from the British occupation of Philadelphia. It is said that Franklin, hearing it said that Howe had taken Philadelphia, remarked, "Philadelphia has taken Howe."—*Editor.*

if he stays, he may be shut up and starved out, and the country, if he advances into it, may become his Saratoga. He has his choice of evils and we of opportunities. If he moves early, it is not only a sign but a proof that he expects no reinforcement, and his delay will prove that he either waits for the arrival of a plan to go upon, or force to execute it, or both; in *which* case our strength will increase more than his, therefore in *any* case we cannot be wrong if we do but proceed.

The particular condition of Pennsylvania deserves the attention of all the other States. Her military strength must not be estimated by the number of inhabitants. Here are men of all nations, characters, professions and interests. Here are the firmest Whigs, surviving, like sparks in the ocean, unquenched and uncooled in the midst of discouragement and disaffection. Here are men losing their all with cheerfulness, and collecting fire and fortitude from the flames of their own estates. Here are others skulking in secret, many making a market of the times, and numbers who are changing to Whig or Tory with the circumstances of every day.

It is by a mere dint of fortitude and perseverance that the Whigs of this State have been able to maintain so good a countenance, and do even what they

have done. We want help, and the sooner it can arrive the more effectual it will be. The invaded State, be it which it may, will always feel an additional burden upon its back, and be hard set to support its civil power with sufficient authority; and this difficulty will rise or fall, in proportion as the other states throw in their assistance to the common cause.

The enemy will most probably make many manœuvres at the opening of this campaign, to amuse and draw off the attention of the several States from the *one thing needful.* We may expect to hear of alarms and pretended expeditions to *this* place and *that* place, to the southward, the eastward, and the northward, all intended to prevent our forming into one formidable body. The less the enemy's strength is, the more subtleties of this kind will they make use of. Their existence depends upon it, because the force of America, when collected, is sufficient to swallow their present army up. It is therefore our business to make short work of it, by bending our whole attention to *this one principal point,* for the instant that the main body under General Howe is defeated, all the inferior alarms throughout the continent, like so many shadows, will follow his downfall.

The only way to finish a war with the least possible bloodshed, or perhaps without any, is to collect

an army, against the power of which the enemy shall have no chance. By not doing this, we prolong the war, and double both the calamities and expenses of it. What a rich and happy country would America be, were she, by a vigorous exertion, to reduce Howe as she has reduced Burgoyne. Her currency would rise to millions beyond its present value. Every man would be rich, and every man would have it in his power to be happy. And why not do these things? What is there to hinder? America is her own mistress and can do what she pleases.

If we had not at this time a man in the field, we could, nevertheless, raise an army in a few weeks sufficient to overwhelm all the force which General Howe at present commands. Vigor and determination will do anything and everything. We began the war with this kind of spirit, why not end it with the same? Here, gentlemen, is the enemy. Here is the army. The interest, the happiness of all America, is centred in this half ruined spot. Come and help us. Here are laurels, come and share them. Here are Tories, come and help us to expel them. Here are Whigs that will make you welcome, and enemies that dread your coming.

The worst of all policies is that of doing things by halves. Penny-wise and pound-foolish, has been the

ruin of thousands. The present spring, if rightly improved, will free us from our troubles, and save us the expense of millions. We have now only one army to cope with. No opportunity can be fairer; no prospect more promising. I shall conclude this paper with a few outlines of a plan, either for filling up the battalions with expedition, or for raising an additional force, for any limited time, on any sudden emergency.

That in which every man is interested, is every man's duty to support. And any burden which falls equally on all men, and from which every man is to receive an equal benefit, is consistent with the most perfect ideas of liberty. I would wish to revive something of that virtuous ambition which first called America into the field. Then every man was eager to do his part, and perhaps the principal reason why we have in any degree fallen therefrom, is because we did not set a right value by it at first, but left it to blaze out of itself, instead of regulating and preserving it by just proportions of rest and service.

Suppose any State whose number of effective inhabitants was 80,000, should be required to furnish 3,200 men towards the defence of the continent on any sudden emergency.

1st, Let the whole number of effective inhabitants be divided into hundreds; then if each of those hundreds turn out four men, the whole number of 3,200 will be had.

2d, Let the name of each hundred men be entered in a book, and let four dollars be collected from each man, with as much more as any of the gentlemen, whose abilities can afford it, shall please to throw in, which gifts likewise shall be entered against the names of the donors.

3d, Let the sums so collected be offered as a present, over and above the bounty of twenty dollars, to any four who may be inclined to propose themselves as volunteers: if more than four offer, the majority of the subscribers present shall determine which; if none offer, then four out of the hundred shall be taken by lot, who shall be entitled to the said sums, and shall either go, or provide others that will, in the space of six days.

4th, As it will always happen that in the space of ground on which a hundred men shall live, there will be always a number of persons who, by age and infirmity, are incapable of doing personal service, and as such persons are generally possessed of the greatest part of property in any country, their portion of service, therefore, will be to furnish each man with

a blanket, which will make a regimental coat, jacket, and breeches, or clothes in lieu thereof, and another for a watch cloak, and two pair of shoes; for however choice people may be of these things matters not in cases of this kind; those who live always in houses can find many ways to keep themselves warm, but it is a shame and a sin to suffer a soldier in the field to want a blanket while there is one in the country.

Should the clothing not be wanted, the superannuated or infirm persons possessing property, may, in lieu thereof, throw in their money subscriptions towards increasing the bounty; for though age will naturally exempt a person from personal service, it cannot exempt him from his share of the charge, because the men are raised for the defence of property and liberty jointly.

There never was a scheme against which objections might not be raised. But this alone is not a sufficient reason for rejection. The only line to judge truly upon is to draw out and admit all the objections which can fairly be made, and place against them all the contrary qualities, conveniences and advantages, then by striking a balance you come at the true character of any scheme, principle or position.

The most material advantages of the plan here proposed are, ease, expedition, and cheapness; yet

the men so raised get a much larger bounty than is any where at present given; because all the expenses, extravagance, and consequent idleness of recruiting are saved or prevented. The country incurs no new debt nor interest thereon; the whole matter being all settled at once and entirely done with. It is a subscription answering all the purposes of a tax, without either the charge or trouble of collecting. The men are ready for the field with the greatest possible expedition, because it becomes the duty of the inhabitants themselves, in every part of the country, to find their proportion of men instead of leaving it to a recruiting sergeant, who, be he ever so industrious, cannot know always where to apply.

I do not propose this as a regular digested plan, neither will the limits of this paper admit of any further remarks upon it. I believe it to be a hint capable of much improvement, and as such submit it to the public.

COMMON SENSE.

LANCASTER, March 21, 1778.

THE AMERICAN CRISIS

VI

To the Earl of Carlisle, General Clinton, and William Eden, Esq., British Commissioners at New York

BRITAIN appointed five commissioners "to treat, consult and agree upon means of quieting the disorders in the colonies of North America." One of them, George Johnston, tried to bribe Members of Congress, and brought himself into such disrepute that he had to withdraw from the commission, which was finally composed of the persons named at the head of this number.

Congress on June 6, 1778, sent its ultimatum to the commissioners, expressing willingness to "attend such terms of peace as may consist with the honor of independent nations," etc. George III was infuriated, and wrote Lord North, August 12, "The present accounts from America seem to put a stop to all negotiations. Further concession is a joke."

THERE is a dignity in the warm passions of a Whig, which is never to be found in the cold malice of a Tory. In the one nature is only heated —in the other she is poisoned. The instant the former has it in his power to punish, he feels a disposition to forgive; but the canine venom of the latter knows no relief but revenge. This general distinction will, I believe, apply in all cases, and suits as well the meridian of England as America.

As I presume your last proclamation will undergo the strictures of other pens, I shall confine my re-

marks to only a few parts thereof. All that you have said might have been comprised in half the compass. It is tedious and unmeaning, and only a repetition of your former follies, with here and there an offensive aggravation. Your cargo of pardons will have no market. It is unfashionable to look at them—even speculation is at an end. They have become a perfect drug, and no way calculated for the climate.

In the course of your proclamation you say, "The policy as well as the *benevolence of Great Britain* have thus far checked the extremes of war, when they tended to distress a people still considered as their fellow subjects, and to desolate a country shortly to become again a source of mutual advantage." What you mean by "the *benevolence* of Great Britain" is to me inconceivable. To put a plain question; do you consider yourselves men or devils? For until this point is settled, no determinate sense can be put upon the expression. You have already equalled and in many cases excelled, the savages of either Indies; and if you have yet a cruelty in store you must have imported it, unmixed with every human material, from the original warehouse of hell.

To the interposition of Providence, and her blessings on our endeavors, and not to British benevolence are we indebted for the short chain that limits your

ravages. Remember you do not, at this time, command a foot of land on the continent of America. Staten Island, York Island, a small part of Long Island, and Rhode Island, circumscribe your power; and even those you hold at the expense of the West Indies. To avoid a defeat, or prevent a desertion of your troops, you have taken up your quarters in holes and corners of inaccessible security; and in order to conceal what every one can perceive, you now endeavor to impose your weakness upon us for an act of mercy. If you think to succeed by such shadowy devices, you are but infants in the political world; you have the A, B, C, of stratagem yet to learn, and are wholly ignorant of the people you have to contend with. Like men in a state of intoxication, you forget that the rest of the world have eyes, and that the same stupidity which conceals you from yourselves exposes you to their satire and contempt.

The paragraph which I have quoted, stands as an introduction to the following: "But when that country [America] professes the unnatural design, not only of estranging herself from us, but of mortgaging herself and her resources to our enemies, the whole contest is changed: and the question is how far Great Britain may, by every means in her power, destroy or render useless, a connection contrived for her ruin,

and the aggrandizement of France. Under such circumstances, the laws of self-preservation must direct the conduct of Britain, and, if the British colonies are to become an accession to France, will direct her to render that accession of as little avail as possible to her enemy."

I consider you in this declaration, like madmen biting in the hour of death. It contains likewise a fraudulent meanness; for, in order to justify a barbarous conclusion, you have advanced a false position. The treaty we have formed with France is open, noble, and generous. It is true policy, founded on sound philosophy, and neither a surrender or mortgage, as you would scandalously insinuate. I have seen every article, and speak from positive knowledge. In France, we have found an affectionate friend and faithful ally; in Britain, we have found nothing but tyranny, cruelty, and infidelity.

But the happiness is, that the mischief you threaten, is not in your power to execute; and if it were, the punishment would return upon you in a ten-fold degree. The humanity of America has hitherto restrained her from acts of retaliation, and the affection she retains for many individuals in England, who have fed, clothed and comforted her prisoners, has, to the present day, warded off her resent-

ment, and operated as a screen to the whole. But even these considerations must cease, when national objects interfere and oppose them. Repeated aggravations will provoke a retort, and policy justify the measure. We mean now to take you seriously up upon your own ground and principle, and as you do, so shall you be done by.

You ought to know, gentlemen, that England and Scotland, are far more exposed to incendiary desolation than America, in her present state, can possibly be. We occupy a country, with but few towns, and whose riches consist in land and annual produce. The two last can suffer but little, and that only within a very limited compass. In Britain it is otherwise. Her wealth lies chiefly in cities and large towns, the depositories of manufactures and fleets of merchantmen. There is not a nobleman's country seat but may be laid in ashes by a single person. Your own may probably contribute to the proof: in short, there is no evil which cannot be returned when you come to incendiary mischief. The ships in the Thames, may certainly be as easily set on fire, as the temporary bridge was a few years ago; yet of that affair no discovery was ever made; and the loss you would sustain by such an event, executed at a proper season, is

infinitely greater than any you can inflict. The East India House and the Bank, neither are nor can be secure from this sort of destruction, and, as Dr. Price justly observes, a fire at the latter would bankrupt the nation.[1] It has never been the custom of France and England when at war, to make those havocs on each other, because the ease with which they could retaliate rendered it as impolitic as if each had destroyed his own.

But think not, gentlemen, that our distance secures you, or our invention fails us. We can much easier accomplish such a point than any nation in Europe. We talk the same language, dress in the same habit, and appear with the same manners as yourselves. We can pass from one part of England to another unsuspected; many of us are as well acquainted with the country as you are, and should you impolitically provoke us, you will most assuredly lament the effects of it. Mischiefs of this kind require no army to execute them. The means are obvious, and the opportunities unguardable. I hold up a warning to your senses, if you have any left, and "to the unhappy people likewise, whose affairs are committed to

[1] Rev. Dr. Price of London, a noted defender of America, whose discourses excited the gratitude of Congress. His sermon in 1789 "On the Love of our Country," was denounced by Burke.—*Editor.*

you." * I call not with the rancor of an enemy, but the earnestness of a friend, on the deluded people of England, lest, between your blunders and theirs, they sink beneath the evils contrived for us.

"He who lives in a glass house," says a Spanish proverb, "should never begin throwing stones." This, gentlemen, is exactly your case, and you must be the most ignorant of mankind, or suppose us so, not to see on which side the balance of accounts will fall. There are many other modes of retaliation, which, for several reasons, I choose not to mention. But be assured of this, that the instant you put your threat into execution, a counter-blow will follow it. If you openly profess yourselves savages, it is high time we should treat you as such, and if nothing but distress can recover you to reason, to punish will become an office of charity.

While your fleet lay last winter in the Delaware, I offered my service to the Pennsylvania Navy Board then at Trenton, as one who would make a party with them, or any four or five gentlemen, on an expedition down the river to set fire to it, and though it was not then accepted, nor the thing personally attempted, it is more than probable that your own folly will provoke a much more ruinous act. Say not when mis-

* General [Sir H.] Clinton's letter to Congress.—*Author.*

chief is done, that you had not warning, and remember that we do not begin it, but mean to repay it. Thus much for your savage and impolitic threat.

In another part of your proclamation you say, "But if the honors of a military life are become the object of the Americans, let them seek those honors under the banners of their rightful sovereign, and in fighting the battles of the united British Empire, against our late mutual and natural enemies." Surely! the union of absurdity with madness was never marked in more distinguishable lines than these. Your rightful sovereign, as you call him, may do well enough for you, who dare not inquire into the humble capacities of the man; but we, who estimate persons and things by their real worth, cannot suffer our judgments to be so imposed upon; and unless it is your wish to see him exposed, it ought to be your endeavor to keep him out of sight. The less you have to say about him the better. We have done with him, and that ought to be answer enough. You have been often told so. Strange! that the answer must be so often repeated. You go a-begging with your king as with a brat, or with some unsaleable commodity you were tired of; and though every body tells you no, no, still you keep hawking him about. But there is one that will have him in a little time, and as we

have no inclination to disappoint you of a customer, we bid nothing for him.

The impertinent folly of the paragraph that I have just quoted, deserves no other notice than to be laughed at and thrown by, but the principle on which it is founded is detestable. We are invited to submit to a man who has attempted by every cruelty to destroy us, and to join him in making war against France, who is already at war against him for our support.

Can Bedlam, in concert with Lucifer, form a more mad and devilish request? Were it possible a people could sink into such apostacy they would deserve to be swept from the earth like the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The proposition is an universal affront to the rank which man holds in the creation, and an indignity to him who placed him there. It supposes him made up without a spark of honor, and under no obligation to God or man.

What sort of men or Christians must you suppose the Americans to be, who, after seeing their most humble petitions insultingly rejected; the most grievous laws passed to distress them in every quarter; an undeclared war let loose upon them, and Indians and negroes invited to the slaughter; who, after seeing their kinsmen murdered, their fellow citizens starved

to death in prisons, and their houses and property destroyed and burned; who, after the most serious appeals to heaven, the most solemn abjuration by oath of all government connected with you, and the most heart-felt pledges and protestations of faith to each other; and who, after soliciting the friendship, and entering into alliances with other nations, should at last break through all these obligations, civil and divine, by complying with your horrid and infernal proposal. Ought we ever after to be considered as a part of the human race? Or ought we not rather to be blotted from the society of mankind, and become a spectacle of misery to the world? But there is something in corruption, which, like a jaundiced eye, transfers the color of itself to the object it looks upon, and sees every thing stained and impure; for unless you were capable of such conduct yourselves, you would never have supposed such a character in us. The offer fixes your infamy. It exhibits you as a nation without faith; with whom oaths and treaties are considered as trifles, and the breaking them as the breaking of a bubble. Regard to decency, or to rank, might have taught you better; or pride inspired you, though virtue could not. There is not left a step in the degradation of character to which you can now

descend; you have put your foot on the ground floor, and the key of the dungeon is turned upon you.

That the invitation may want nothing of being a complete monster, you have thought proper to finish it with an assertion which has no foundation, either in fact or philosophy; and as Mr. Ferguson, your secretary, is a man of letters, and has made civil society his study, and published a treatise on that subject, I address this part to him.[1]

In the close of the paragraph which I last quoted, France is styled the "natural enemy" of England, and by way of lugging us into some strange idea, she is styled "the late mutual and natural enemy" of both countries. I deny that she ever was the natural enemy of either; and that there does not exist in nature such a principle. The expression is an unmeaning barbarism, and wholly unphilosophical, when applied to beings of the same species, let their station in the creation be what it may. We have a perfect idea of a natural enemy when we think of the devil, because the enmity is perpetual, unalterable and unabateable. It admits, neither of peace, truce,

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[1] Adam Ferguson, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, author of an "Essay on the History of Civil Society" (1767), and "Institutes of Moral Philosophy" (1769). —*Editor.*

or treaty; consequently the warfare is eternal, and therefore it is natural. But man with man cannot arrange in the same opposition. Their quarrels are accidental and equivocally created. They become friends or enemies as the change of temper, or the cast of interest inclines them. The Creator of man did not constitute them the natural enemy of each other. He has not made any one order of beings so. Even wolves may quarrel, still they herd together. If any two nations are so, then must all nations be so, otherwise it is not nature but custom, and the offence frequently originates with the accuser. England is as truly the natural enemy of France, as France is of England, and perhaps more so. Separated from the rest of Europe, she has contracted an unsocial habit of manners, and imagines in others the jealousy she creates in herself. Never long satisfied with peace, she supposes the discontent universal, and buoyed up with her own importance, conceives herself the only object pointed at. The expression has been often used, and always with a fraudulent design; for when the idea of a natural enemy is conceived, it prevents all other inquiries, and the real cause of the quarrel is hidden in the universality of the conceit. Men start at the notion of a natural enemy, and ask no other question. The cry obtains credit like the alarm

of a mad dog, and is one of those kind of tricks, which, by operating on the common passions, secures their interest through their folly.

But we, sir, are not to be thus imposed upon. We live in a large world, and have extended our ideas beyond the limits and prejudices of an island. We hold out the right hand of friendship to all the universe, and we conceive that there is a sociality in the manners of France, which is much better disposed to peace and negotiation than that of England, and until the latter becomes more civilized, she cannot expect to live long at peace with any power. Her common language is vulgar and offensive, and children suck in with their milk the rudiments of insult —"The arm of Britain! The mighty arm of Britain! Britain that shakes the earth to its center and its poles! The scourge of France! The terror of the world! That governs with a nod, and pours down vengeance like a God." This language neither makes a nation great or little; but it shows a savageness of manners, and has a tendency to keep national animosity alive. The entertainments of the stage are calculated to the same end, and almost every public exhibition is tinctured with insult. Yet England is always in dread of France,—terrified at the apprehension of an invasion, suspicious of being outwitted in

a treaty, and privately cringing though she is publicly offending. Let her, therefore, reform her manners and do justice, and she will find the idea of a natural enemy to be only a phantom of her own imagination.

Little did I think, at this period of the war, to see a proclamation which could promise you no one useful purpose whatever, and tend only to expose you. One would think that you were just awakened from a four years' dream, and knew nothing of what had passed in the interval. Is this a time to be offering pardons, or renewing the long forgotten subjects of charters and taxation? Is it worth your while, after every force has failed you, to retreat under the shelter of argument and persuasion? Or can you think that we, with nearly half your army prisoners, and in alliance with France, are to be begged or threatened into submission by a piece of paper? But as commissioners at a hundred pounds sterling a week each, you conceive yourselves bound to do something, and the genius of ill-fortune told you, that you must write.

For my own part, I have not put pen to paper these several months. Convinced of our superiority by the issue of every campaign, I was inclined to hope, that that which all the rest of the world now see, would

become visible to you, and therefore felt unwilling to ruffle your temper by fretting you with repetitions and discoveries. There have been intervals of hesitation in your conduct, from which it seemed a pity to disturb you, and a charity to leave you to yourselves. You have often stopped, as if you intended to think, but your thoughts have ever been too early or too late.

There was a time when Britain disdained to answer, or even hear a petition from America. That time is past and she in her turn is petitioning our acceptance. We now stand on higher ground, and offer her peace; and the time will come when she, perhaps in vain, will ask it from us. The latter case is as probable as the former ever was. She cannot refuse to acknowledge our independence with greater obstinacy than she before refused to repeal her laws; and if America alone could bring her to the one, united with France she will reduce her to the other. There is something in obstinacy which differs from every other passion; whenever it fails it never recovers, but either breaks like iron, or crumbles sulkily away like a fractured arch. Most other passions have their periods of fatigue and rest; their suffering and their cure; but obstinacy has no resource, and the first wound is mortal. You have al-

ready begun to give it up, and you will, from the natural construction of the vice, find yourselves both obliged and inclined to do so.

If you look back you see nothing but loss and disgrace. If you look forward the same scene continues, and the close is an impenetrable gloom. You may plan and execute little mischiefs, but are they worth the expense they cost you, or will such partial evils have any effect on the general cause? Your expedition to Egg Harbor, will be felt at a distance like an attack upon a hen-roost, and expose you in Europe, with a sort of childish frenzy. Is it worth while to keep an army to protect you in writing proclamations, or to get once a year into winter quarters? Possessing yourselves of towns is not conquest, but convenience, and in which you will one day or other be trepanned. Your retreat from Philadelphia, was only a timely escape, and your next expedition may be less fortunate.

It would puzzle all the politicians in the universe to conceive what you stay for, or why you should have stayed so long. You are prosecuting a war in which you confess you have neither object nor hope, and that conquest, could it be effected, would not repay the charges: in the mean while the rest of your affairs are running to ruin, and a European war kindling

against you. In such a situation, there is neither doubt nor difficulty; the first rudiments of reason will determine the choice, for if peace can be procured with more advantages than even a conquest can be obtained, he must be an idiot indeed that hesitates.

But you are probably buoyed up by a set of wretched mortals, who, having deceived themselves, are cringing, with the duplicity of a spaniel, for a little temporary bread. Those men will tell you just what you please. It is their interest to amuse, in order to lengthen out their protection. They study to keep you amongst them for that very purpose; and in proportion as you disregard their advice, and grow callous to their complaints, they will stretch into improbability, and season their flattery the higher. Characters like these are to be found in every country, and every country will despise them.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 20, 1778.

THE AMERICAN CRISIS

VII

To the People of England

ADDRESSING the people of England in this instalment, the author says: "It was always my design to dedicate a 'Crisis' to you, when the time should come, that would properly make it a Crisis. That time has now arrived." Paine carefully reviews the entire situation existing between Britain and America and advises the former that her cause is hopeless. "You neglected," he says, "to reckon either the cost or the consequences . . . Britain's idea of national honor is national insult." In this instalment occurs the earliest use of the phrase "the religion of Humanity."

After a first outburst of wrath, the British king weakened, and in a letter to Lord North, May 12, 1778, it is evident that he saw in the American rebuff to the commissioners an end to all negotiations, and plainly abandoned hope of Britain regaining the American colonies.

THERE are stages in the business of serious life in which to amuse is cruel, but to deceive is to destroy; and it is of little consequence, in the conclusion, whether men deceive themselves, or submit, by a kind of mutual consent, to the impositions of each other. That England has long been under the influence of delusion or mistake, needs no other proof than the unexpected and wretched situation that she is now involved in: and so powerful has been the influence, that no provision was ever made or thought of against the mis-

fortune, because the possibility of its happening was never conceived.

The general and successful resistance of America, the conquest of Burgoyne, and a war in France, were treated in parliament as the dreams of a discontented opposition, or a distempered imagination. They were beheld as objects unworthy of a serious thought, and the bare intimation of them afforded the ministry a triumph of laughter. Short triumph indeed! For everything which has been predicted has happened, and all that was promised has failed. A long series of politics so remarkably distinguished by a succession of misfortunes, without one alleviating turn, must certainly have something in it systematically wrong. It is sufficient to awaken the most credulous into suspicion, and the most obstinate into thought. Either the means in your power are insufficient, or the measures ill planned; either the execution has been bad, or the thing attempted impracticable; or, to speak more emphatically, either you are not able or heaven is not willing. For, why is it that you have not conquered us? Who, or what has prevented you? You have had every opportunity that you could desire, and succeeded to your utmost wish in every preparatory means. Your fleets and armies have arrived in America without an accident. No

uncommon fortune has intervened. No foreign nation has interfered until the time which you had allotted for victory was passed. The opposition, either in or out of parliament, neither disconcerted your measures, retarded or diminished your force. They only foretold your fate. Every ministerial scheme was carried with as high a hand as if the whole nation had been unanimous. Every thing wanted was asked for, and every thing asked for was granted.

A greater force was not within the compass of your abilities to send, and the time you sent it was of all others the most favorable. You were then at rest with the whole world beside. You had the range of every court in Europe uncontradicted by us. You amused us with a tale of commissioners of peace, and under that disguise collected a numerous army and came almost unexpectedly upon us. The force was much greater than we looked for; and that which we had to oppose it with, was unequal in numbers, badly armed, and poorly disciplined; beside which, it was embodied only for a short time, and expired within a few months after your arrival. We had governments to form; measures to concert; an army to train, and every necessary article to import or to create. Our non-importation scheme had exhausted our stores, and your command by sea intercepted our supplies.

We were a people unknown, and unconnected with the political world, and strangers to the disposition of foreign powers. Could you possibly wish for a more favorable conjunction of circumstances? Yet all these have happened and passed away, and, as it were, left you with a laugh. There are likewise events of such an original nativity as can never happen again, unless a new world should arise from the ocean.

If any thing can be a lesson to presumption, surely the circumstances of this war will have their effect. Had Britain been defeated by any European power, her pride would have drawn consolation from the importance of her conquerors; but in the present case, she is excelled by those that she affected to despise, and her own opinions retorting upon herself, become an aggravation of her disgrace. Misfortune and experience are lost upon mankind, when they produce neither reflection nor reformation. Evils, like poisons, have their uses, and there are diseases which no other remedy can reach. It has been the crime and folly of England to suppose herself invincible, and that, without acknowledging or perceiving that a full third of her strength was drawn from the country she is now at war with. The arm of Britain has been spoken of as the arm of the Almighty, and she has lived of late as if she thought

the whole world created for her diversion. Her politics, instead of civilizing, has tended to brutalize mankind, and under the vain, unmeaning title of "Defender of the Faith," she has made war like an Indian against the religion of humanity.[1] Her cruelties in the East Indies will *never* be forgotten, and it is somewhat remarkable that the produce of that ruined country, transported to America, should there kindle up a war to punish the destroyer. The chain is continued, though with a mysterious kind of uniformity both in the crime and the punishment. The latter runs parallel with the former, and time and fate will give it a perfect illustration.

When information is withheld, ignorance becomes a reasonable excuse; and one would charitably hope that the people of England do not encourage cruelty from choice but from mistake. Their recluse situation, surrounded by the sea, preserves them from the calamities of war, and keeps them in the dark as to the conduct of their own armies. They see not, therefore they feel not. They tell the tale that is told them and believe it, and accustomed to no other news than their own, they receive it, stripped of its horrors

[1] This is doubtless the earliest use of the phrase, "the religion of humanity." By "Indian," is meant, of course, the aboriginal American, the term being employed by the British officials.—*Editor.*

and prepared for the palate of the nation, through the channel of the London Gazette. They are made to believe that their generals and armies differ from those of other nations, and have nothing of rudeness or barbarity in them. They suppose them what they wish them to be. They feel a disgrace in thinking otherwise, and naturally encourage the belief from a partiality to themselves. There was a time when I felt the same prejudices, and reasoned from the same errors; but experience, sad and painful experience, has taught me better. What the conduct of former armies was, I know not, but what the conduct of the present is, I well know. It is low, cruel, indolent and profligate; and had the people of America no other cause for separation than what the army has occasioned, that alone is cause sufficient.

The field of politics in England is far more extensive than that of news. Men have a right to reason for themselves, and though they cannot contradict the intelligence in the London Gazette, they may frame upon it what sentiments they please. But the misfortune is, that a general ignorance has prevailed over the whole nation respecting America. The ministry and the minority have both been wrong. The former was always so, the latter only lately so. Politics, to be executively right, must have a unity of

means and time, and a defect in either overthrows the whole. The ministry rejected the plans of the minority while they were practicable, and joined in them when they became impracticable. From wrong measures they got into wrong time, and have now completed the circle of absurdity by closing it upon themselves.

I happened to come to America a few months before the breaking out of hostilities. I found the disposition of the people such, that they might have been led by a thread and governed by a reed. Their suspicion was quick and penetrating, but their attachment to Britain was obstinate, and it was at that time a kind of treason to speak against it. They disliked the ministry, but they esteemed the nation. Their idea of grievance operated without resentment, and their single object was reconciliation. Bad as I believed the ministry to be, I never conceived them capable of a measure so rash and wicked as the commencing of hostilities; much less did I imagine the nation would encourage it. I viewed the dispute as a kind of law-suit, in which I supposed the parties would find a way either to decide or settle it. I had no thoughts of independence or of arms. The world could not then have persuaded me that I should be either a soldier or an author. If I had any talents

for either, they were buried in me, and might ever have continued so, had not the necessity of the times dragged and driven them into action. I had formed my plan of life, and conceiving myself happy, wished every body else so. But when the country, into which I had just set my foot, was set on fire about my ears, it was time to stir.[1] It was time for every man to stir. Those who had been long settled had something to defend; those who had just come had something to pursue; and the call and the concern was equal and universal. For in a country where all men were once adventurers, the difference of a few years in their arrival could make none in their right.

The breaking out of hostilities opened a new suspicion in the politics of America, which, though at that time very rare, has since been proved to be very right. What I allude to is, "a secret and fixed determination in the British Cabinet to annex America to the crown of England as a conquered country." If this be taken as the object, then the whole line of conduct pursued by the ministry, though rash in its origin and ruinous in its consequences, is nevertheless uniform and consistent in its parts. It applies

[1] Paine arrived in America, Baltimore, November 30, 1774.—*Editor.*

to every case and resolves every difficulty. But if taxation, or any thing else, be taken in its room, there is no proportion between the object and the charge. Nothing but the whole soil and property of the country can be placed as a possible equivalent against the millions which the ministry expended. No taxes raised in America could possibly repay it. A revenue of two millions sterling a year would not discharge the sum and interest accumulated thereon, in twenty years.

Reconciliation never appears to have been the wish or the object of the administration; they looked on conquest as certain and infallible, and, under that persuasion, sought to drive the Americans into what they might style a general rebellion, and then, crushing them with arms in their hands, reap the rich harvest of a general confiscation, and silence them for ever. The dependents at court were too numerous to be provided for in England. The market for plunder in the East Indies was over; and the profligacy of government required that a new mine should be opened, and that mine could be no other than America, conquered and forfeited. They had no where else to go. Every other channel was drained; and extravagance, with the thirst of a drunkard, was gaping for supplies.

If the ministry deny this to have been their plan, it becomes them to explain what was their plan. For either they have abused us in coveting property they never labored for, or they have abused you in expending an amazing sum upon an incompetent object. Taxation, as I mentioned before, could never be worth the charge of obtaining it by arms; and any kind of formal obedience which America could have made, would have weighed with the lightness of a laugh against such a load of expense. It is therefore most probable that the ministry will at last justify their policy by their dishonesty, and openly declare, that their original design was conquest: and, in this case, it well becomes the people of England to consider how far the nation would have been benefited by the success.

In a general view, there are few conquests that repay the charge of making them, and mankind are pretty well convinced that it can never be worth their while to go to war for profit's sake. If they are made war upon, their country invaded, or their existence at stake, it is their duty to defend and preserve themselves, but in every other light, and from every other cause, is war inglorious and detestable. But to return to the case in question—

When conquests are made of foreign countries, it is supposed that the *commerce* and *dominion* of the country which made them are extended. But this could neither be the object nor the consequence of the present war. You enjoyed the whole commerce before. It could receive no possible addition by a conquest, but on the contrary, must diminish as the inhabitants were reduced in numbers and wealth. You had the same *dominion* over the country which you used to have, and had no complaint to make against her for breach of any part of the contract between you or her, or contending against any established custom, commercial, political or territorial. The country and commerce were both your own when you *began* to conquer, in the same manner and form as they had been your own a hundred years before. Nations have sometimes been induced to make conquests for the sake of reducing the power of their enemies, or bringing it to a balance with their own. But this could be no part of your plan. No foreign authority was claimed here, neither was any such authority suspected by you, or acknowledged or imagined by us. What then, in the name of heaven, could you go to war for? Or what chance could you possibly have in the event, but either to hold the same country which you held before, and that in a

much worse condition, or to lose, with an amazing expense, what you might have retained without a farthing of charges?

War never can be the interest of a trading nation, any more than quarrelling can be profitable to a man in business. But to make war with those who trade with us, is like setting a bull-dog upon a customer at the shop-door. The least degree of common sense shows the madness of the latter, and it will apply with the same force of conviction to the former. Piratical nations, having neither commerce or commodities of their own to lose, may make war upon all the world, and lucratively find their account in it; but it is quite otherwise with Britain: for, besides the stoppage of trade in time of war, she exposes more of her own property to be lost, than she has the chance of taking from others. Some ministerial gentlemen in parliament have mentioned the greatness of her trade as an apology for the greatness of her loss. This is miserable politics indeed! Because it ought to have been given as a reason for her not engaging in a war at first. The coast of America commands the West India trade almost as effectually as the coast of Africa does that of the Straits; and England can no more carry on the former without

the consent of America, than she can the latter without a Mediterranean pass.

In whatever light the war with America is considered upon commercial principles, it is evidently the interest of the people of England not to support it; and why it has been supported so long, against the clearest demonstrations of truth and national advantage, is, to me, and must be to all the reasonable world, a matter of astonishment. Perhaps it may be said that I live in America, and write this from interest. To this I reply, that my principle is universal. My attachment is to all the world, and not to any particular part, and if what I advance is right, no matter where or who it comes from. We have given the proclamation of your commissioners a currency in our newspapers, and I have no doubt you will give this a place in yours. To oblige and be obliged is fair.

Before I dismiss this part of my address, I shall mention one more circumstance in which I think the people of England have been equally mistaken: and then proceed to other matters.

There is such an idea existing in the world, as that of *national honor*, and this, falsely understood, is oftentimes the cause of war. In a Christian and philosophical sense, mankind seem to have stood still

at individual civilization, and to retain as nations all the original rudeness of nature. Peace by treaty is only a cessation of violence for a reformation of sentiment. It is a substitute for a principle that is wanting and ever will be wanting till the idea of *national honor* be rightly understood. As individuals we profess ourselves Christians, but as nations we are heathens, Romans, and what not. I remember the late Admiral Saunders declaring in the House of Commons, and that in the time of peace, "That the city of Madrid laid in ashes was not a sufficient atonement for the Spaniards taking off the rudder of an English sloop of war." I do not ask whether this is Christianity or morality, I ask whether it is decency? whether it is proper language for a nation to use? In private life we call it by the plain name of bullying, and the elevation of rank cannot alter its character. It is, I think, exceedingly easy to define what ought to be understood by national honor; for that which is the best character for an individual is the best character for a nation; and wherever the latter exceeds or falls beneath the former, there is a departure from the line of true greatness.

I have thrown out this observation with a design of applying it to Great Britain. Her ideas of national honor seem devoid of that benevolence of heart, that

universal expansion of philanthropy, and that triumph over the rage of vulgar prejudice, without which man is inferior to himself, and a companion of common animals. To know who she shall regard or dislike, she asks what country they are of, what religion they profess, and what property they enjoy. Her idea of national honor seems to consist in national insult, and that to be a great people, is to be neither a Christian, a philosopher, or a gentleman, but to threaten with the rudeness of a bear, and to devour with the ferocity of a lion. This perhaps may sound harsh and uncourtly, but it is too true, and the more is the pity.

I mention this only as her general character. But towards America she has observed no character at all; and destroyed by her conduct what she assumed in her title. She set out with the title of parent, or mother country. The association of ideas which naturally accompany this expression, are filled with everything that is fond, tender and forbearing. They have an energy peculiar to themselves, and, overlooking the accidental attachment of common affections, apply with infinite softness to the first feelings of the heart. It is a political term which every mother can feel the force of, and every child can judge of.

It needs no painting of mine to set it off, for nature only can do it justice.

But has any part of your conduct to America corresponded with the title you set up? If in your general national character you are unpolished and severe, in this you are inconsistent and unnatural, and you must have exceeding false notions of national honor to suppose that the world can admire a want of humanity or that national honor depends on the violence of resentment, the inflexibility of temper, or the vengeance of execution.

I would willingly convince you, and that with as much temper as the times will suffer me to do, that as you opposed your own interest by quarrelling with us, so likewise your national honor, rightly conceived and understood, was no ways called upon to enter into a war with America; had you studied true greatness of heart, the first and fairest ornament of mankind, you would have acted directly contrary to all that you have done, and the world would have ascribed it to a generous cause. Besides which, you had (though with the assistance of this country) secured a powerful name by the last war. You were known and dreaded abroad; and it would have been wise in you to have suffered the world to have slept undisturbed under that idea. It was to you a force

existing without expense. It produced to you all the advantages of real power; and you were stronger through the universality of that charm, than any future fleets and armies may probably make you. Your greatness was so secured and interwoven with your silence, that you ought never to have awakened mankind, and had nothing to do but to be quiet. Had you been true politicians you would have seen all this, and continued to draw from the magic of a name, the force and authority of a nation.

Unwise as you were in breaking the charm, you were still more unwise in the manner of doing it. Samson only told the secret, but you have performed the operation; you have shaven your own head, and wantonly thrown away the locks. America was the hair from which the charm was drawn that infatuated the world. You ought to have quarrelled with no power; but with her upon no account. You had nothing to fear from any condescension you might make. You might have humored her, even if there had been no justice in her claims, without any risk to your reputation; for Europe, fascinated by your fame, would have ascribed it to your benevolence, and America, intoxicated by the grant, would have slumbered in her fetters.

But this method of studying the progress of the passions, in order to ascertain the probable conduct of mankind, is a philosophy in politics which those who preside at St. James's have no conception of. They know no other influence than corruption and reckon all their probabilities from precedent. A new case is to them a new world, and while they are seeking for a parallel they get lost. The talents of Lord Mansfield can be estimated at best no higher than those of a sophist. He understands the subtleties but not the elegance of nature; and by continually viewing mankind through the cold medium of the law, never thinks of penetrating into the warmer region of the mind. As for Lord North, it is his happiness to have in him more philosophy than sentiment, for he bears flogging like a top, and sleeps the better for it. His punishment becomes his support, for while he suffers the lash for his sins, he keeps himself up by twirling about. In politics, he is a good arithmetician, and in every thing else nothing at all.

There is one circumstance which comes so much within Lord North's province as a financier, that I am surprised it should escape him, which is, the different abilities of the two countries in supporting the expense; for, strange as it may seem, England is not a match for America in this particular. By a curious

kind of revolution in accounts, the people of England seem to mistake their poverty for their riches; that is, they reckon their national debt as a part of their national wealth. They make the same kind of error which a man would do, who after mortgaging his estate, should add the money borrowed, to the full value of the estate, in order to count up his worth, and in this case he would conceive that he got rich by running into debt. Just thus it is with England. The government owed at the beginning of this war one hundred and thirty-five millions sterling, and though the individuals to whom it was due had a right to reckon their shares as so much private property, yet to the nation collectively it was so much poverty. There are as effectual limits to public debts as to private ones, for when once the money borrowed is so great as to require the whole yearly revenue to discharge the interest thereon, there is an end to further borrowing; in the same manner as when the interest of a man's debts amounts to the yearly income of his estate, there is an end to his credit. This is nearly the case with England, the interest of her present debt being at least equal to one half of her yearly revenue, so that out of ten millions annually collected by taxes, she has but five that she can call her own.

The very reverse of this was the case with America; she began the war without any debt upon her, and in order to carry it on, she neither raised money by taxes, nor borrowed it upon interest, but created it; and her situation at this time continues so much the reverse of yours that taxing would make her rich, whereas it would make you poor. When we shall have sunk the sum which we have created, we shall then be out of debt, be just as rich as when we began, and all the while we are doing it shall feel no difference, because the value will rise as the quantity decreases.

There was not a country in the world so capable of bearing the expense of a war as America; not only because she was not in debt when she began, but because the country is young and capable of infinite improvement, and has an almost boundless tract of new lands in store; whereas England has got to her extent of age and growth, and has not unoccupied land or property in reserve. The one is like a young heir coming to a large improvable estate; the other like an old man whose chances are over, and his estate mortgaged for half its worth.

In the second number of the Crisis, which I find has been republished in England, I endeavored to set forth the impracticability of conquering America. I

stated every case, that I conceived could possibly happen, and ventured to predict its consequences. As my conclusions were drawn not artfully, but naturally, they have all proved to be true. I was upon the spot; knew the politics of America, her strength and resources, and by a train of services, the best in my power to render, was honored with the friendship of the congress, the army and the people. I considered the cause a just one. I know and feel it a just one, and under that confidence never made my own profit or loss an object. My endeavor was to have the matter well understood on both sides, and I conceived myself tendering a general service, by setting forth to the one the impossibility of being conquered, and to the other the impossibility of conquering. Most of the arguments made use of by the ministry for supporting the war, are the very arguments that ought to have been used against supporting it; and the plans, by which they thought to conquer, are the very plans in which they were sure to be defeated. They have taken every thing up at the wrong end. Their ignorance is astonishing, and were you in my situation you would see it. They may, perhaps, have your confidence, but I am persuaded that they would make very indifferent members of Congress. I know what England is, and what America is, and from the compound

of knowledge, am better enabled to judge of the issue than what the king or any of his ministers can be.

In this number I have endeavored to show the ill policy and disadvantages of the war. I believe many of my remarks are new. Those which are not so, I have studied to improve and place in a manner that may be clear and striking. Your failure is, I am persuaded, as certain as fate. America is above your reach. She is at least your equal in the world, and her independence neither rests upon your consent, nor can it be prevented by your arms. In short, you spend your substance in vain, and impoverish yourselves without a hope.

But suppose you had conquered America, what advantages, collectively or individually, as merchants, manufacturers, or conquerors, could you have looked for? This is an object you seemed never to have attended to. Listening for the sound of victory, and led away by the frenzy of arms, you neglected to reckon either the cost or the consequences. You must all pay towards the expense; the poorest among you must bear his share, and it is both your right and your duty to weigh seriously the matter. Had America been conquered, she might have been parcelled out in grants to the favorites at court, but no share of it would have fallen to you. Your taxes would not have

been lessened, because she would have been in no condition to have paid any towards your relief. We are rich by contrivance of our own, which would have ceased as soon as you became masters. Our paper money will be of no use in England, and silver and gold we have none. In the last war you made many conquests, but were any of your taxes lessened thereby? On the contrary, were you not taxed to pay for the charge of making them, and has not the same been the case in every war?

To the Parliament I wish to address myself in a more particular manner. They appear to have supposed themselves partners in the chase, and to have hunted with the lion from an expectation of a right in the booty; but in this it is most probable they would, as legislators, have been disappointed. The case is quite a new one, and many unforeseen difficulties would have arisen thereon. The Parliament claimed a legislative right over America, and the war originated from that pretence. But the army is supposed to belong to the crown, and if America had been conquered through their means, the claim of the legislature would have been suffocated in the conquest. Ceded, or conquered, countries are supposed to be out of the authority of Parliament. Taxation is exercised over them by prerogative and not by law. It was at-

tempted to be done in the Grenadas a few years ago, and the only reason why it was not done was because the crown had made a prior relinquishment of its claim. Therefore, Parliament have been all this while supporting measures for the establishment of their authority, in the issue of which, they would have been triumphed over by the prerogative. This might have opened a new and interesting opposition between the Parliament and the crown. The crown would have said that it conquered for itself, and that to conquer for Parliament was an unknown case. The Parliament might have replied, that America not being a foreign country, but a country in rebellion, could not be said to be conquered, but reduced; and thus continued their claim by disowning the term. The crown might have rejoined, that however America might be considered at first, she became foreign at last by a declaration of independence, and a treaty with France; and that her case being, by that treaty, put within the law of nations, was out of the law of Parliament, who might have maintained, that as their claim over America had never been surrendered, so neither could it be taken away. The crown might have insisted, that though the claim of Parliament could not be taken away, yet, being an inferior, it might be superseded; and that, whether the claim was

withdrawn from the object, or the object taken from the claim, the same separation ensued; and that America being subdued after a treaty with France, was to all intents and purposes a regal conquest, and of course the sole property of the king. The Parliament, as the legal delegates of the people, might have contended against the term "inferior," and rested the case upon the antiquity of power, and this would have brought on a set of very interesting and rational questions.

1st, What is the original fountain of power and honor in any country?

2d, Whether the prerogative does not belong to the people?

3d, Whether there is any such thing as the English constitution?

4th, Of what use is the crown to the people?

5th, Whether he who invented a crown was not an enemy to mankind?

6th, Whether it is not a shame for a man to spend a million a year and do no good for it, and whether the money might not be better applied?

7th, Whether such a man is not better dead than alive?

8th, Whether a Congress, constituted like that of America, is not the most happy and consistent form of

government in the world?—With a number of others of the same import.

In short, the contention about the dividend might have distracted the nation; for nothing is more common than to agree in the conquest and quarrel for the prize; therefore it is, perhaps, a happy circumstance, that our successes have prevented the dispute.

If the Parliament had been thrown out in their claim, which it is most probable they would, the nation likewise would have been thrown out in their expectation; for as the taxes would have been laid on by the crown without the Parliament, the revenue arising therefrom, if any could have arisen, would not have gone into the exchequer, but into the privy purse, and so far from lessening the taxes, would not even have been added to them, but served only as pocket money to the crown. The more I reflect on this matter, the more I am satisfied at the blindness and ill policy of my countrymen, whose wisdom seems to operate without discernment, and their strength without an object.

To the great bulwark of the nation, I mean the mercantile and manufacturing part thereof, I likewise present my address. It is your interest to see America an independent, and not a conquered country. If conquered, she is ruined; and if ruined, poor; con-

sequently the trade will be a trifle, and her credit doubtful. If independent, she flourishes, and from her flourishing must your profits arise. It matters nothing to you who governs America, if your manufactures find a consumption there. Some articles will consequently be obtained from other places, and it is right that they should; but the demand for others will increase, by the great influx of inhabitants which a state of independence and peace will occasion, and in the final event you may be enriched. The commerce of America is perfectly free, and ever will be so. She will consign away no part of it to any nation. She has not to her friends, and certainly will not to her enemies; though it is probable that your narrow-minded politicians, thinking to please you thereby, may some time or other unnecessarily make such a proposal. Trade flourishes best when it is free, and it is weak policy to attempt to fetter it. Her treaty with France is on the most liberal and generous principles, and the French, in their conduct towards her, have proved themselves to be philosophers, politicians, and gentlemen.

To the ministry I likewise address myself. You, gentlemen, have studied the ruin of your country, from which it is not within your abilities to rescue her. Your attempts to recover her are as ridiculous

as your plans which involved her are detestable. The commissioners, being about to depart, will probably bring you this, and with it my sixth number, addressed to them; and in so doing they carry back more *Common Sense* than they brought, and you likewise will have more than when you sent them.

Having thus addressed you severally, I conclude by addressing you collectively. It is a long lane that has no turning. A period of sixteen years of misconduct and misfortune, is certainly long enough for any one nation to suffer under; and upon a supposition that war is not declared between France and you, I beg to place a line of conduct before you that will easily lead you out of all your troubles. It has been hinted before, and cannot be too much attended to.

Suppose America had remained unknown to Europe till the present year, and that Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, in another voyage round the world, had made the first discovery of her, in the same condition that she is now in, of arts, arms, numbers, and civilization. What, I ask, in that case, would have been your conduct towards her? For *that* will point out what it ought to be now. The problems and their solutions are equal, and the right line of the one is the parallel of the other. The question takes in every circumstance that can possibly arise. It reduces poli-

tics to a simple thought, and is moreover a mode of investigation, in which, while you are studying your interest the simplicity of the case will cheat you into good temper. You have nothing to do but to suppose that you have found America, and she appears found to your hand, and while in the joy of your heart you stand still to admire her, the path of politics rises straight before you.

Were I disposed to paint a contrast, I could easily set off what you have done in the present case, against what you would have done in *that* case, and by justly opposing them, conclude a picture that would make you blush. But, as, when any of the prouder passions are hurt, it is much better philosophy to let a man slip into a good temper than to attack him in a bad one, for that reason, therefore, I only state the case, and leave you to reflect upon it.

To go a little back into politics, it will be found that the true interest of Britain lay in proposing and promoting the independence of America immediately after the last peace; for the expense which Britain had then incurred by defending America as her own dominions, ought to have shown her the policy and necessity of changing the *style* of the country, as the best probable method of preventing future wars and expense, and the only method by which she could

hold the commerce without the charge of sovereignty. Besides which, the title which she assumed, of parent country, led to, and pointed out the propriety, wisdom and advantage of a separation; for, as in private life, children grow into men, and by setting up for themselves, extend and secure the interest of the whole family, so in the settlement of colonies large enough to admit of maturity, the same policy should be pursued, and the same consequences would follow. Nothing hurts the affections both of parents and children so much, as living too closely connected, and keeping up the distinction too long. Domineering will not do over those, who, by a progress in life, have become equal in rank to their parents, that is, when they have families of their own; and though they may conceive themselves the subjects of their advice, will not suppose them the objects of their government. I do not, by drawing this parallel, mean to admit the title of *parent country*, because, if it is due any where, it is due to Europe collectively, and the first settlers from England were driven here by persecution. I mean only to introduce the term for the sake of policy and to show from your title the line of your interest.

When you saw the state of strength and opulence, and that by her own industry, which America arrived

at, you ought to have advised her to set up for herself, and proposed an alliance of interest with her, and in so doing you would have drawn, and that at her own expense, more real advantage, and more military supplies and assistance, both of ships and men, than from any weak and wrangling government that you could exercise over her. In short, had you studied only the domestic politics of a family, you would have learned how to govern the state; but, instead of this easy and natural line, you flew out into every thing which was wild and outrageous, till, by following the passion and stupidity of the pilot, you wrecked the vessel within sight of the shore.

Having shown what you ought to have done, I now proceed to show why it was not done. The caterpillar circle of the court had an interest to pursue, distinct from, and opposed to yours; for though by the independence of America and an alliance therewith, the trade would have continued, if not increased, as in many articles neither country can go to a better market, and though by defending and protecting herself, she would have been no expense to you, and consequently your national charges would have decreased, and your taxes might have been proportionably lessened thereby; yet the striking off so many places from the court calendar was put in opposition to the

interest of the nation. The loss of thirteen government ships, with their appendages, here and in England, is a shocking sound in the ear of a hungry courtier. Your present king and ministry will be the ruin of you; and you had better risk a revolution and call a Congress, than be thus led on from madness to despair, and from despair to ruin. America has set you the example, and you may follow it and be free.

I now come to the last part, a war with France. This is what no man in his senses will advise you to, and all good men would wish to prevent. Whether France will declare war against you, is not for me in this place to mention, or to hint, even if I knew it; but it must be madness in you to do it first. The matter is come now to a full crisis, and peace is easy if willingly set about. Whatever you may think, France has behaved handsomely to you. She would have been unjust to herself to have acted otherwise than she did; and having accepted our offer of alliance she gave you genteel notice of it. There was nothing in her conduct reserved or indelicate, and while she announced her determination to support her treaty, she left you to give the first offence. America, on her part, has exhibited a character of firmness to the world. Unprepared and unarmed, without form or government, she singly opposed a nation that domineered over half

the globe. The greatness of the deed demands respect; and though you may feel resentment, you are compelled both to wonder and admire.

Here I rest my arguments and finish my address. Such as it is, it is a gift, and you are welcome. It was always my design to dedicate a *Crisis* to you, when the time should come that would properly *make it a Crisis;* and when, likewise, I should catch myself in a temper to write it, and suppose you in a condition to read it. *That* time has now arrived, and with it the opportunity for conveyance. For the commissioners—*poor commissioners!* having proclaimed, that "*yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,*" have waited out the date, and, discontented with their God, are returning to their gourd. And all the harm I wish them is, that it may not *wither* about their ears, and that they may not make their exit in the belly of a whale.[1]

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 21, 1778.

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[1] George III, in a letter to Lord North May 12, 1778, seems to have given up hope of recovering the American colonies. "All that can now be done is steadily to pursue the plan very wisely adopted in the spring, the providing Nova Scotia, the Floridas, and Canada, with troops." He proposes that New York be abandoned.—*Editor.*

P. S.—Though in the tranquillity of my mind I have concluded with a laugh, yet I have something to mention to the *commissioners*, which, to them, is serious and worthy their attention. Their authority is derived from an Act of Parliament, which likewise describes and *limits* their *official* powers. Their commission, therefore, is only a recital, and personal investiture, of those powers, or a nomination and description of the persons who are to execute them. Had it contained any thing contrary to, or gone beyond the line of, the written law from which it is derived, and by which it is bound, it would, by the English constitution, have been treason in the crown, and the king been subject to an impeachment. He dared not, therefore, put in his commission what you have put in your proclamation, that is, he dared not have authorised you in that commission to burn and destroy any thing in America. You are both in the *act* and in the *commission* styled *commissioners for restoring peace*, and the methods for doing it are there pointed out. Your last proclamation is signed by you as commissioners *under that act*. You make Parliament the patron of its contents. Yet, in the body of it, you insert matters contrary both to the spirit and letter of the act, and what likewise your king dared not have put in his commission to you. The state of things in

England, gentlemen, is too ticklish for you to run hazards. You are *accountable to Parliament for the execution of that act according to the letter of it.* Your heads may pay for breaking it, for you certainly have broke it by exceeding it. And as a friend, who would wish you to escape the paw of the lion, as well as the belly of the whale, I civilly hint to you, *to keep within compass.*

Sir Harry Clinton, strictly speaking, is as accountable as the rest; for though a general, he is likewise a commissioner, acting under a superior authority. His first obedience is due to the act; and his plea of being a general, will not and cannot clear him as a commissioner, for that would suppose the crown, in its single capacity, to have a power of dispensing with an Act of Parliament. Your situation, gentlemen, is nice and critical, and the more so because England is unsettled. Take heed! Remember the times of Charles the First! For Laud and Stafford fell by trusting to a hope like yours.

Having thus shown you the danger of your proclamation, I now show you the folly of it. The means contradict your design: you threaten to lay waste, in order to render America a useless acquisition of alliance to France. I reply, that the more destruction you commit (if you could do it) the more valuable

to France you make that alliance. You can destroy only houses and goods; and by so doing you increase our demand upon her for materials and merchandise; for the wants of one nation, provided it has *freedom* and *credit*, naturally produce riches to the other; and, as you can neither ruin the land nor prevent the vegetation, you would increase the exportation of our produce in payment, which would be to her a new fund of wealth. In short, had you cast about for a plan on purpose to enrich your enemies, you could not have hit upon a better.

C. S.

THE AMERICAN CRISIS

VIII

Address to the People of England

IN this "Crisis," the author, referring to the British army's invasion of America, and to the miseries of war in one's own country, alludes to "the triumphant appearance of the combined fleets in the Channel and the expedition of Paul Jones on the western and eastern coasts of England and Scotland," which will, he says, bring to their minds a true picture of the distresses of war on one's own soil.

"Hitherto," Paine says, again addressing the people of England, "you have experienced the expenses, but none of the miseries of war."

Jones was an intimate friend of Paine. The British refused to consider Jones as the commander of the American fleet, and pictured him in pamphlets and cartoons as a pirate. "Everything you suffer," Paine tells the people of England, "you have sought."

TRUSTING (says the king of England in his speech of November last,) in the divine providence, and in the justice of my cause, I am firmly resolved to prosecute the war with vigor, and to make every exertion in order to compel our enemies to equitable terms of peace and accommodation." To this declaration the United States of America, and the confederated powers of Europe will reply, *if Britain will have war, she shall have enough of it.*

Five years have nearly elapsed since the commencement of hostilities, and every campaign, by a gradual

decay, has lessened your ability to conquer, without producing a serious thought on your condition or your fate. Like a prodigal lingering in an habitual consumption, you feel the relics of life, and mistake them for recovery. New schemes, like new medicines, have administered fresh hopes, and prolonged the disease instead of curing it. A change of generals, like a change of physicians, served only to keep the flattery alive, and furnish new pretences for new extravagance.

"*Can Britain fail?*"* has been proudly asked at the undertaking of every enterprise; and that "*whatever she wills is fate,*"† has been given with the solemnity of prophetic confidence; and though the question has been constantly replied to by disappointment, and the prediction falsified by misfortune, yet still the insult continued, and your catalogue of national evils increased therewith. Eager to persuade the world of her power, she considered destruction as the minister of greatness, and conceived that the glory of a nation like that of an [American] Indian, lay in the number of its scalps and the miseries which it inflicts.

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* Whitehead's New Year's ode for 1776.—*Author.*

† Ode at the installation of Lord North, for Chancellor of the University of Oxford.—*Author.*

Fire, sword and want, as far as the arms of Britain could extend them, have been spread with wanton cruelty along the coast of America; and while you, remote from the scene of suffering, had nothing to lose and as little to dread, the information reached you like a tale of antiquity, in which the distance of time defaces the conception, and changes the severest sorrows into conversable amusement.

This makes the second paper, addressed perhaps in vain, to the people of England. That advice should be taken wherever example has failed, or precept be regarded where warning is ridiculed, is like a picture of hope resting on despair: but when time shall stamp with universal currency the facts you have long encountered with a laugh, and the irresistible evidence of accumulated losses, like the handwriting on the wall, shall add terror to distress, you will then, in a conflict of suffering, learn to sympathize with others by feeling for yourselves.

The triumphant appearance of the combined fleets in the channel and at your harbor's mouth, and the expedition of Captain Paul Jones, on the western and eastern coasts of England and Scotland, will, by placing you in the condition of an endangered country, read to you a stronger lecture on the calamities of invasion, and bring to your minds a truer picture of

promiscuous distress, than the most finished rhetoric can describe or the keenest imagination conceive.

Hitherto you have experienced the expenses, but nothing of the miseries of war. Your disappointments have been accompanied with no immediate suffering, and your losses came to you only by intelligence. Like fire at a distance you heard not even the cry; you felt not the danger, you saw not the confusion. To you every thing has been foreign but the taxes to support it. You knew not what it was to be alarmed at midnight with an armed enemy in the streets. You were strangers to the distressing scene of a family in flight, and to the thousand restless cares and tender sorrows that incessantly arose. To see women and children wandering in the severity of winter, with the broken remains of a well furnished house, and seeking shelter in every crib and hut, were matters that you had no conception of. You knew not what it was to stand by and see your goods chopped for fuel, and your beds ripped to pieces to make packages for plunder. The misery of others, like a tempestuous night, added to the pleasures of your own security. You even enjoyed the storm, by contemplating the difference of conditions, and that which carried sorrow into the breasts of thousands served but to heighten in you a species of tranquil

pride. Yet these are but the fainter sufferings of war, when compared with carnage and slaughter, the miseries of a military hospital, or a town in flames.

The people of America, by anticipating distress, had fortified their minds against every species you could inflict. They had resolved to abandon their homes, to resign them to destruction, and to seek new settlements rather than submit. Thus familiarized to misfortune, before it arrived, they bore their portion with the less regret: the justness of their cause was a continual source of consolation, and the hope of final victory, which never left them, served to lighten the load and sweeten the cup allotted them to drink.

But when their troubles shall become yours, and invasion be transferred upon the invaders, you will have neither their extended wilderness to fly to, their cause to comfort you, nor their hope to rest upon. Distress with them was sharpened by no self-reflection. They had not brought it on themselves. On the contrary, they had by every proceeding endeavored to avoid it, and had descended even below the mark of congressional character, to prevent a war. The national honor or the advantages of independence were matters which, at the commencement of the dispute, they had never studied, and it was only at the last moment that the measure was resolved on. Thus cir-

cumstanced, they naturally and conscientiously felt a dependence upon providence. They had a clear pretension to it, and had they failed therein, infidelity had gained a triumph.

But your condition is the reverse of theirs. Every thing you suffer you have sought: nay, had you created mischiefs on purpose to inherit them, you could not have secured your title by a firmer deed. The world awakens with no pity at your complaints. You felt none for others; you deserve none for yourselves. Nature does not interest herself in cases like yours, but, on the contrary, turns from them with dislike, and abandons them to punishment. You may now present memorials to what court you please, but so far as America is the object, none will listen. The policy of Europe, and the propensity there in every mind to curb insulting ambition, and bring cruelty to judgment, are unitedly against you; and where nature and interest reinforce with each other, the compact is too intimate to be dissolved.

Make but the case of others your own, and your own theirs, and you will then have a clear idea of the whole. Had France acted towards her colonies as you have done, you would have branded her with every epithet of abhorrence; and had you, like her, stepped in to succor a struggling people, all Europe must have

echoed with your own applauses. But entangled in the passion of dispute you see it not as you ought, and form opinions thereon which suit with no interest but your own. You wonder that America does not rise in union with you to impose on herself a portion of your taxes and reduce herself to unconditional submission. You are amazed that the southern powers of Europe do not assist you in conquering a country which is afterwards to be turned against themselves; and that the northern ones do not contribute to reinstate you in America who already enjoy the market for naval stores by the separation. You seem surprised that Holland does not pour in her succors to maintain you mistress of the seas, when her own commerce is suffering by your act of navigation; or that any country should study her own interest while yours is on the carpet.

Such excesses of passionate folly, and unjust as well as unwise resentment, have driven you on, like Pharaoh, to unpitied miseries, and while the importance of the quarrel shall perpetuate your disgrace, the flag of America will carry it round the world. The natural feelings of every rational being will be against you, and wherever the story shall be told, you will have neither excuse nor consolation left. With an unsparing hand, and an insatiable mind, you have

desolated the world, to gain dominion and to lose it; and while, in a frenzy of avarice and ambition, the east and the west are doomed to tributary bondage, you rapidly earned destruction as the wages of a nation.

At the thoughts of a war at home, every man amongst you ought to tremble. The prospect is far more dreadful there than in America. Here the party that was against the measures of the continent were in general composed of a kind of neutrals, who added strength to neither army. There does not exist a being so devoid of sense and sentiment as to covet "*unconditional submission*," and therefore no man in America could be with you in principle. Several might from a cowardice of mind, prefer it to the hardships and dangers of opposing it; but the same disposition that gave them such a choice, unfitted them to act either for or against us. But England is rent into parties, with equal shares of resolution. The principle which produced the war divides the nation. Their animosities are in the highest state of fermentation, and both sides, by a call of the militia, are in arms. No human foresight can discern, no conclusion can be formed, what turn a war might take, if once set on foot by an invasion. She is not now in a fit disposition to make a common cause of her own

affairs, and having no conquests to hope for abroad, and nothing but expenses arising at home, her everything is staked upon a defensive combat, and the further she goes the worse she is off.

There are situations that a nation may be in, in which peace or war, abstracted from every other consideration, may be politically right or wrong. When nothing can be lost by a war, but what must be lost without it, war is then the policy of that country; and such was the situation of America at the commencement of hostilities: but when no security can be gained by a war, but what may be accomplished by a peace, the case becomes reversed, and such now is the situation of England.

That America is beyond the reach of conquest, is a fact which experience has shown and time confirmed, and this admitted, what, I ask, is now the object of contention? If there be any honor in pursuing self-destruction with inflexible passion—if national suicide be the perfection of national glory, you may, with all the pride of criminal happiness, expire unenvied and unrivalled. But when the tumult of war shall cease, and the tempest of present passions be succeeded by calm reflection, or when those, who, sudviving its fury, shall inherit from you a legacy of debts and misfortunes, when the yearly revenue shall

scarcely be able to discharge the interest of the one, and no possible remedy be left for the other, ideas far different from the present will arise, and embitter the remembrance of former follies. A mind disarmed of its rage feels no pleasure in contemplating a frantic quarrel. Sickness of thought, the sure consequence of conduct like yours, leaves no ability for enjoyment, no relish for resentment; and though, like a man in a fit, you feel not the injury of the struggle, nor distinguish between strength and disease, the weakness will nevertheless be proportioned to the violence, and the sense of pain increase with the recovery.

To what persons or to whose system of politics you owe your present state of wretchedness, is a matter of total indifference to America. They have contributed, however unwillingly, to set her above themselves, and she, in the tranquillity of conquest, resigns the inquiry. The case now is not so properly who began the war, as who continues it. That there are men in all countries to whom a state of war is a mine of wealth, is a fact never to be doubted. Characters like these naturally breed in the putrefaction of distempered times, and after fattening on the disease, they perish with it, or, impregnated with the stench, retreat into obscurity.

But there are several erroneous notions to which you likewise owe a share of your misfortunes, and which, if continued, will only increase your trouble and your losses. An opinion hangs about the gentlemen of the minority, that America would relish measures under *their* administration, which she would not from the present cabinet. On this rock Lord Chatham would have split had he gained the helm, and several of his survivors are steering the same course. Such distinctions in the infancy of the argument had some degree of foundation, but they now serve no other purpose than to lengthen out a war, in which the limits of a dispute, being fixed by the fate of arms, and guaranteed by treaties, are not to be changed or altered by trivial circumstances.

The ministry, and many of the minority, sacrifice their time in disputing on a question with which they have nothing to do, namely, whether America shall be independent or not. Whereas the only question that can come under their determination is, whether they will accede to it or not. They confound a military question with a political one, and undertake to supply by a vote what they lost by a battle. Say she shall not be independent, and it will signify as much as if they voted against a decree of fate, or say that she shall, and she will be no more independent than before.

Questions which, when determined, cannot be executed, serve only to show the folly of dispute and the weakness of disputants.

From a long habit of calling America your own, you suppose her governed by the same prejudices and conceits which govern yourselves. Because you have set up a particular denomination of religion to the exclusion of all others, you imagine she must do the same, and because you, with an unsociable narrowness of mind, have cherished enmity against France and Spain, you suppose her alliance must be defective in friendship. Copying her notions of the world from you, she formerly thought as you instructed, but now feeling herself free, and the prejudice removed, she thinks and acts upon a different system. It frequently happens that in proportion as we are taught to dislike persons and countries, not knowing why, we feel an ardor of esteem upon the removal of the mistake: it seems as if something was to be made amends for, and we eagerly give in to every office of friendship, to atone for the injury of the error.

But, perhaps, there is something in the extent of countries, which, among the generality of people, insensibly communicates extension of the mind. The soul of an islander, in its native state, seems bounded

by the foggy confines of the water's edge, and all beyond affords to him matters only for profit or curiosity, not for friendship. His island is to him his world, and fixed to that, his every thing centers in it; while those who are inhabitants of a continent, by casting their eye over a larger field, take in likewise a larger intellectual circuit, and thus approaching nearer to an acquaintance with the universe, their atmosphere of thought is extended, and their liberality fills a wider space. In short, our minds seem to be measured by countries when we are men, as they are by places when we are children, and until something happens to disentangle us from the prejudice, we serve under it without perceiving it.

In addition to this, it may be remarked, that men who study any universal science, the principles of which are universally known, or admitted, and applied without distinction to the common benefit of all countries, obtain thereby a larger share of philanthropy than those who only study national arts and improvements. Natural philosophy, mathematics and astronomy, carry the mind from the country to the creation, and give it a fitness suited to the extent. It was not Newton's honor, neither could it be his pride, that he was an Englishman, but that he was a

philosopher: the heavens had liberated him from the prejudices of an island, and science had expanded his soul as boundless as his studies.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, March, 1780.

THE AMERICAN CRISIS

IX

CHARLESTON, South Carolina, besieged by Howe for forty days, had at length capitulated, when Paine wrote "Crisis IX," which is dated June 9, 1780. The author, ever optimistic, says that if the news is true, "afflicting as it may be, yet it will renew in us the spirit of former days, and will produce in us an advantage more important than its loss." He observes that "It is not the conquest of towns that can reduce a country as extensive as this."

Paine tells of a "voluntary subscription begun to raise a fund of hard money" for the benefit of the patriot cause, but does not mention the fact that it was he, now clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly, who proposed the subscription, and that he headed it with five hundred dollars. In a postscript Paine ascribes the fall of Charleston to an insufficient supply of provisions.

HAD America pursued her advantages with half the spirit that she resisted her misfortunes, she would, before now, have been a conquering and a peaceful people; but lulled in the lap of soft tranquillity, she rested on her hopes, and adversity only has convulsed her into action. Whether subtlety or sincerity at the close of the last year induced the enemy to an appearance for peace, is a point not material to know; it is sufficient that we see the effects it has had on our politics, and that we sternly rise to resent the delusion.

The war, on the part of America, has been a war of natural feelings. Brave in distress; serene in con-

quest; drowsy while at rest; and in every situation generously disposed to peace; a dangerous calm, and a most heightened zeal have, as circumstances varied, succeeded each other. Every passion but that of despair has been called to a tour of duty; and so mistaken has been the enemy, of our abilities and disposition, that when she supposed us conquered, we rose the conquerors. The extensiveness of the United States, and the variety of their resources; the universality of their cause, the quick operation of their feelings, and the similarity of their sentiments, have, in every trying situation, produced a *something*, which, favored by providence, and pursued with ardor, has accomplished in an instant the business of a campaign. We have never deliberately sought victory, but snatched it; and bravely undone in an hour the blotted operations of a season.

The reported fate of Charleston, like the misfortunes of 1776, has at last called forth a spirit, and kindled up a flame, which perhaps no other event could have produced. If the enemy has circulated a falsehood, they have unwisely aggravated us into life, and if they have told us the truth, they have unintentionally done us a service. We were returning with folded arms from the fatigues of war, and thinking and sitting leisurely down to enjoy repose. The

dependence that has been put upon Charleston threw a drowsiness over America. We looked on the business done—the conflict over—the matter settled—or that all which remained unfinished would follow of itself. In this state of dangerous relaxation, exposed to the poisonous infusions of the enemy, and having no common danger to attract our attention, we were extinguishing, by stages, the ardor we began with, and surrendering by piece-meal the virtue that defended us.

Afflicting as the loss of Charleston may be, yet if it universally rouse us from the slumber of twelve months past, and renew in us the spirit of former days, it will produce an advantage more important than its loss. America ever *is* what she *thinks* herself to be. Governed by sentiment, and acting her own mind, she becomes, as she pleases, the victor or the victim.

It is not the conquest of towns, nor the accidental capture of garrisons, that can reduce a country so extensive as this. The sufferings of one part can never be relieved by the exertions of another, and there is no situation the enemy can be placed in that does not afford to us the same advantages which he seeks himself. By dividing his force, he leaves every post attackable. It is a mode of war that carries with

it a confession of weakness, and goes on the principle of distress rather than conquest.

The decline of the enemy is visible, not only in their operations, but in their plans; Charleston originally made but a secondary object in the system of attack, and it is now become their principal one, because they have not been able to succeed elsewhere. It would have carried a cowardly appearance in Europe had they formed their grand expedition, in 1776, against a part of the continent where there was no army, or not a sufficient one to oppose them; but failing year after year in their impressions here, and to the eastward and northward, they deserted their capital design, and prudently contenting themselves with what they can get, give a flourish of honor to conceal disgrace.

But this piece-meal work is not conquering the continent. It is a discredit in them to attempt it, and in us to suffer it. It is now full time to put an end to a war of aggravations, which, on one side, has no possible object, and on the other has every inducement which honor, interest, safety and happiness can inspire. If we suffer them much longer to remain among us, we shall become as bad as themselves. An association of vice will reduce us more than the sword. A nation hardened in the practice of iniquity knows

better how to profit by it, than a young country newly corrupted. We are not a match for them in the line of advantageous guilt, nor they for us on the principles which we bravely set out with. Our first days were our days of honor. They have marked the character of America wherever the story of her wars are told; and convinced of this, we have nothing to do but wisely and unitedly to tread the well known track. The progress of a war is often as ruinous to individuals, as the issue of it is to a nation; and it is not only necessary that our forces be such that we be conquerors in the end, but that by timely exertions we be secure in the interim. The present campaign will afford an opportunity which has never presented itself before, and the preparations for it are equally necessary, whether Charleston stand or fall. Suppose the first, it is in that case only a failure of the enemy, not a defeat. All the conquest that a besieged town can hope for, is, not to be conquered; and compelling an enemy to raise the siege, is to the besieged a victory. But there must be a probability amounting almost to a certainty, that would justify a garrison marching out to attack a retreat. Therefore should Charleston not be taken, and the enemy abandon the siege, every other part of the continent should prepare to meet them; and, on the contrary, should it be taken, the

same preparations are necessary to balance the loss, and put ourselves in a position to co-operate with our allies, immediately on their arrival.

We are not now fighting our battles alone, as we were in 1776; England, from a malicious disposition to America, has not only not declared war against France and Spain, but, the better to prosecute her passions here, has afforded those powers no military object, and avoids them, to distress us. She will suffer her West India islands to be overrun by France, and her southern settlements to be taken by Spain, rather than quit the object that gratifies her revenge. This conduct, on the part of Britain, has pointed out the propriety of France sending a naval and land force to co-operate with America on the spot. Their arrival cannot be very distant, nor the ravages of the enemy long. The recruiting the army, and procuring the supplies, are the two things most necessary to be accomplished, and a capture of either of the enemy's divisions will restore to America peace and plenty.

At a crisis, big, like the present, with expectation and events, the whole country is called to unanimity and exertion. Not an ability ought now to sleep, that can produce but a mite to the general good, nor even a whisper to pass that militates against it. The necessity of the case, and the importance of the conse-

quences, admit no delay from a friend, no apology from an enemy. To spare now, would be the height of extravagance, and to consult present ease, would be to sacrifice it perhaps forever.

America, rich in patriotism and produce, can want neither men nor supplies, when a serious necessity calls them forth. The slow operation of taxes, owing to the extensiveness of collection, and their depreciated value before they arrived in the treasury, have, in many instances, thrown a burden upon government, which has been artfully interpreted by the enemy into a general decline throughout the country. Yet this, inconvenient as it may at first appear, is not only remediable, but may be turned to an immediate advantage; for it makes no real difference, whether a certain number of men, or company of militia (and in this country every man is a militia-man), are directed by law to send a recruit at their own expense, or whether a tax is laid on them for that purpose, and the man hired by government afterwards. The first, if there is any difference, is both cheapest and best, because it saves the expense which would attend collecting it as a tax, and brings the man sooner into the field than the modes of recruiting formerly used; and, on this principle, a law has been passed in this state, for recruiting two men from each company of

militia, which will add upwards of a thousand to the force of the country.

But the flame which has broken forth in this city since the report from New York, of the loss of Charleston, not only does honor to the place, but, like the blaze of 1776, will kindle into action the scattered sparks throughout America. The valor of a country may be learned by the bravery of its soldiery, and the general cast of its inhabitants, but confidence of success is best discovered by the active measures pursued by men of property; and when the spirit of enterprise becomes so universal as to act at once on all ranks of men, a war may then, and not till then, be styled truly popular.

In 1776, the ardor of the enterprising part was considerably checked by the real revolt of some, and the coolness of others. But in the present case, there is a firmness in the substance and property of the country to the public cause. An association has been entered into by the merchants, tradesmen, and principal inhabitants of the city [Philadelphia], to receive and support the new state money at the value of gold and silver; a measure which, while it does them honor, will likewise contribute to their interest, by rendering the operations of the campaign convenient and effectual.

Nor has the spirit of exertion stopped here. A voluntary subscription is likewise begun, to raise a fund of hard money, to be given as bounties, to fill up the full quota of the Pennsylvania line. It has been the remark of the enemy, that every thing in America has been done by the force of government; but when she sees individuals throwing in their voluntary aid, and facilitating the public measures in concert with the established powers of the country, it will convince her that the cause of America stands not on the will of a few but on the broad foundation of property and popularity.

Thus aided and thus supported, disaffection will decline, and the withered head of tyranny expire in America. The ravages of the enemy will be short and limited, and like all their former ones, will produce a victory over themselves.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, June 9, 1780.

P. S. At the time of writing this number of the Crisis, the loss of Charleston, though believed by some, was more confidently disbelieved by others. But there ought to be no longer a doubt upon the matter. Charleston is gone, and I believe for the want of a sufficient supply of provisions. The man

that does not now feel for the honor of the best and noblest cause that ever a country engaged in, and exert himself accordingly, is no longer worthy of a peaceable residence among a people determined to be free.

C. S.

THE CRISIS EXTRAORDINARY

On the Subject of Taxation

THIS supplementary number of "The American Crisis" series was published October 4, 1780. Paine, who was Clerk of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, paid for the printing himself, turning over to William Harris, printer, his salary order for $360 in payment.

The author submits a plan for raising money, and shows the necessity and the advantages to be derived from it. "The annual sum wanted," he says, "is two millions and the average rate is thirteen shillings and fourpence per head."

At the end of "Crisis Extraordinary" Paine adds a postscript, only to be found in the first editions, which we print and which tells quite fully the story of General Arnold's attempt to deliver up to the British, through Major André, America's important military stronghold, West Point. Paine sees in the bribery a confession of Britain's inability to conquer the Americans by legitimate methods of warfare.

IT IS impossible to sit down and think seriously on the affairs of America, but the original principles upon which she resisted, and the glow and ardor which they inspired, will occur like the undefaced remembrance of a lovely scene. To trace over in imagination the purity of the cause, the voluntary sacrifices that were made to support it, and all the various turnings of the war in its defence, is at once both paying and receiving respect. The principles deserve to be remembered, and to remember them rightly is repossessing them. In this indulgence of generous recollection, we become gainers by what we

seem to give, and the more we bestow the richer we become.

So extensively right was the ground on which America proceeded, that it not only took in every just and liberal sentiment which could impress the heart, but made it the direct interest of every class and order of men to defend the country. The war, on the part of Britain, was originally a war of covetousness. The sordid and not the splendid passions gave it being. The fertile fields and prosperous infancy of America appeared to her as mines for tributary wealth. She viewed the hive, and disregarding the industry that had enriched it, thirsted for the honey. But in the present stage of her affairs, the violence of temper is added to the rage of avarice; and therefore, that which at the first setting out proceeded from purity of principle and public interest, is now heightened by all the obligations of necessity; for it requires but little knowledge of human nature to discern what would be the consequence, were America again reduced to the subjection of Britain. Uncontrolled power, in the hands of an incensed, imperious, and rapacious conqueror, is an engine of dreadful execution, and woe be to that country over which it can be exercised. The names of Whig and Tory would then be sunk in the general term of rebel, and the

oppression, whatever it might be, would, with very few instances of exception, light equally on all.

Britain did not go to war with America for the sake of dominion, because she was then in possession; neither was it for the extension of trade and commerce, because she had monopolized the whole, and the country had yielded to it; neither was it to extinguish what *she* might call rebellion, because before she began no resistance existed. It could then be from no other motive than avarice, or a design of establishing, in the first instance, the same taxes in America as are paid in England (which, as I shall presently show, are above eleven times heavier than the taxes we now pay for the present year, 1780) or, in the second instance, to confiscate the whole property of America, in case of resistance and conquest of the latter, of which she had then no doubt.

I shall now proceed to show what the taxes in England are, and what the yearly expense of the present war is to her—what the taxes of this country amount to, and what the annual expense of defending it effectually will be to us; and shall endeavor concisely to point out the cause of our difficulties, and the advantages on one side, and the consequences on the other, in case we do, or do not, put ourselves in an effectual state of defence. I mean to be open, candid,

and sincere. I see a universal wish to expel the enemy from the country, a murmuring because the war is not carried on with more vigor, and my intention is to show, as shortly as possible, both the reason and the remedy.

The number of souls in England (exclusive of Scotland and Ireland) is seven millions,* and the number of souls in America is three millions.

The amount of taxes in England (exclusive of Scotland and Ireland) was, before the present war commenced, eleven millions six hundred and forty-two thousand six hundred and fifty-three pounds sterling; which, on an average, is no less a sum than one pound thirteen shillings and three-pence sterling per head per annum, men, women, and children; besides county taxes, taxes for the support of the poor, and a tenth of all the produce of the earth for the support of the bishops and clergy.† Nearly five millions

* This is taking the highest number that the people of England have been, or can be rated at.—*Author.*

† The following is taken from Dr. Price's state of the taxes of England, pp. 96, 97, 98.

An account of the money drawn from the public by taxes, annually, being the medium of three years before the year 1776.

Amount of customs in England	2,528,275 *l.*
Amount of the excise in England	4,649,892
Land tax at 3*s.*	1,300,000
Land tax at 1*s.* in the pound	450,000

of this sum went annually to pay the interest of the national debt, contracted by former wars, and the remaining sum of six millions six hundred and forty-two thousand six hundred pounds was applied to defray the yearly expense of government, the peace establishment of the army and navy, placemen, pensioners, etc.; consequently the whole of the enormous taxes being thus appropriated, she had nothing to spare out of them towards defraying the expenses of the present war or any other. Yet had she not been in

Salt duties	218,739
Duties on stamps, cards, dice, advertisements, bonds, leases, indentures, newspapers, almanacks, etc.	280,788
Duties on houses and windows	385,369
Post office, seizures, wine licences, hackney coaches, etc.	250,000
Annual profits from lotteries	150,000
Expense of collecting the excise in England	297,887
Expense of collecting the customs in England	468,703
Interest of loans on the land tax at 4*s.* expenses of collection, militia, etc.	250,000
Perquisites, etc. to custom-house officers, &c. supposed	250,000
Expense of collecting the salt duties in England 10 1-2 per cent.	27,000
Bounties on fish exported	18,000
Expense of collecting the duties on stamps, cards, advertisements, etc. at 5 and 1-4 per cent.	18,000
Total	11,642,653 *l.*

debt at the beginning of the war, as we were not, and, like us, had only a land and not a naval war to carry on, her then revenue of eleven millions and a half pounds sterling would have defrayed all her annual expenses of war and government within each year.

But this not being the case with her, she is obliged to borrow about ten millions pounds sterling, yearly, to prosecute the war that she is now engaged in, (this year she borrowed twelve) and lay on new taxes to discharge the interest; allowing that the present war has cost her only fifty millions sterling, the interest thereon, at five per cent., will be two millions and an half; therefore the amount of her taxes now must be fourteen millions, which on an average is no less than forty shillings sterling, per head, men, women and children, throughout the nation. Now as this expense of fifty millions was borrowed on the hopes of conquering America, and as it was avarice which first induced her to commence the war, how truly wretched and deplorable would the condition of this country be, were she, by her own remissness, to suffer an enemy of such a disposition, and so circumstanced, to reduce her to subjection.

I now proceed to the revenues of America.

I have already stated the number of souls in America to be three millions, and by a calculation

that I have made, which I have every reason to believe is sufficiently correct, the whole expense of the war, and the support of the several governments, may be defrayed for two million pounds sterling annually; which, on an average, is thirteen shillings and four pence per head, men, women, and children, and the peace establishment at the end of the war will be but three quarters of a million, or five shillings sterling per head. Now, throwing out of the question everything of honor, principle, happiness, freedom, and reputation in the world, and taking it up on the simple ground of interest, I put the following case:

Suppose Britain was to conquer America, and, as a conqueror, was to lay her under no other conditions than to pay the same proportion towards her annual revenue which the people of England pay: our share, in that case, would be six million pounds sterling yearly. Can it then be a question, whether it is best to raise two millions to defend the country, and govern it ourselves, and only three quarters of a million afterwards, or pay six millions to have it conquered, and let the enemy govern it?

Can it be supposed that conquerors would choose to put themselves in a worse condition than what they granted to the conquered? In England, the tax on rum is five shillings and one penny sterling per gal-

lon, which is one silver dollar and fourteen coppers. Now would it not be laughable to imagine, that after the expense they have been at, they would let either Whig or Tory drink it cheaper than themselves? Coffee, which is so inconsiderable an article of consumption and support here, is there loaded with a duty which makes the price between five and six shillings per pound, and a penalty of fifty pounds sterling on any person detected in roasting it in his own house. There is scarcely a necessary of life that you can eat, drink, wear, or enjoy, that is not there loaded with a tax; even the light from heaven is only permitted to shine into their dwellings by paying eighteen pence sterling per window annually; and the humblest drink of life, small beer, cannot there be purchased without a tax of nearly two coppers per gallon, besides a heavy tax upon the malt, and another on the hops before it is brewed, exclusive of a land-tax on the earth which produces them. In short, the condition of that country, in point of taxation, is so oppressive, the number of her poor so great, and the extravagance and rapaciousness of the court so enormous, that, were they to effect a conquest of America, it is then only that the distresses of America would begin. Neither would it signify anything to a man whether he be Whig or Tory. The people of

England, and the ministry of that country, know us by no such distinctions. What they want is clear, solid revenue, and the modes which they would take to procure it, would operate alike on all. Their manner of reasoning would be short, because they would naturally infer, that if we were able to carry on a war of five or six years against them, we were able to pay the same taxes which they do.

I have already stated that the expense of conducting the present war, and the government of the several states, may be done for two millions sterling, and the establishment in the time of peace, for three quarters of a million.*

As to navy matters, they flourish so well, and are so well attended to by individuals, that I think it consistent on every principle of real use and economy, to turn the navy into hard money (keeping only three or four packets) and apply it to the service of the army. We shall not have a ship the less; the use of them, and the benefit from them, will be greatly increased, and their expense saved. We are now allied with a formidable naval power, from whom we

* I have made the calculations in sterling, because it is a rate generally known in all the states, and because, likewise, it admits of an easy comparison between our expenses to support the war, and those of the enemy. Four silver dollars and a half is one pound sterling, and three pence over.—*Author.*

derive the assistance of a navy. And the line in which we can prosecute the war, so as to reduce the common enemy and benefit the alliance most effectually, will be by attending closely to the land service.

I estimate the charge of keeping up and maintaining an army, officering them, and all expenses included, sufficient for the defence of the country, to be equal to the expense of forty thousand men at thirty pounds sterling per head, which is one million two hundred thousand pounds.

I likewise allow four hundred thousand pounds for continental expenses at home and abroad.

And four hundred thousand pounds for the support of the several state governments—the amount will then be:

For the army	1,200,000 *l.*
Continental expenses at home and abroad	400,000
Government of the several states	400,000
Total	2,000,000 *l.*

I take the proportion of this state, Pennsylvania, to be an eighth part of the thirteen United States; the quota then for us to raise will be two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling; two hundred thousand of which will be our share for the support and pay of the army, and continental expenses at home

and abroad, and fifty thousand pounds for the support of the state government.

In order to gain an idea of the proportion in which the raising such a sum will fall, I make the following calculation:

Pennsylvania contains three hundred and seventy-five thousand inhabitants, men, women and children; which is likewise an eighth of the number of inhabitants of the whole United States: therefore, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling to be raised among three hundred and seventy-five thousand persons, is, on an average, thirteen shillings and four pence per head, per annum, or something more than one shilling sterling per month. And our proportion of three quarters of a million for the government of the country, in time of peace, will be ninety-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling; fifty thousand of which will be for the government expenses of the state, and forty-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds for continental expenses at home and abroad.

The peace establishment then will, on an average, be five shillings sterling per head. Whereas, was England now to stop, and the war cease, her peace establishment would continue the same as it is now, viz. forty shillings per head; therefore was our taxes

necessary for carrying on the war, as much per head as hers now is, and the difference to be only whether we should, at the end of the war, pay at the rate of five shillings per head, or forty shillings per head, the case needs no thinking of. But as we can securely defend and keep the country for one third less than what our burden would be if it was conquered, and support the governments afterwards for one eighth of what Britain would levy on us, and could I find a miser whose heart never felt the emotion of a spark of principle, even that man, uninfluenced by every love but the love of money, and capable of no attachment but to his interest, would and must, from the frugality which governs him, contribute to the defence of the country, or he ceases to be a miser and becomes an idiot. But when we take in with it every thing that can ornament mankind; when the line of our interest becomes the line of our happiness; when all that can cheer and animate the heart, when a sense of honor, fame, character, at home and abroad, are interwoven not only with the security but the increase of property, there exists not a man in America, unless he be an hired emissary, who does not see that his good is connected with keeping up a sufficient defence.

I do not imagine that an instance can be produced in the world, of a country putting herself to such an

amazing charge to conquer and enslave another, as Britain has done. The sum is too great for her to think of with any tolerable degree of temper; and when we consider the burden she sustains, as well as the disposition she has shown, it would be the height of folly in us to suppose that she would not reimburse herself by the most rapid means, had she America once more within her power. With such an oppression of expense, what would an empty conquest be to her! What relief under such circumstances could she derive from a victory without a prize? It was money, it was revenue she first went to war for, and nothing but *that* would satisfy her. It is not the nature of avarice to be satisfied with any thing else. Every passion that acts upon mankind has a peculiar mode of operation. Many of them are temporary and fluctuating; they admit of cessation and variety. But avarice is a fixed, uniform passion. It neither abates of its vigor nor changes its object; and the reason why it does not, is founded in the nature of things, for wealth has not a rival where avarice is a ruling passion. One beauty may excel another, and extinguish from the mind of man the pictured remembrance of a former one: but wealth is the phœnix of avarice, and therefore it cannot seek a new object, because there is not another in the world.

I now pass on to show the value of the present taxes, and compare them with the annual expense; but this I shall preface with a few explanatory remarks.

There are two distinct things which make the payment of taxes difficult; the one is the large and real value of the sum to be paid, and the other is the scarcity of the thing in which the payment is to be made; and although these appear to be one and the same, they are in several instances not only different, but the difficulty springs from different causes.

Suppose a tax to be laid equal to one half of what a man's yearly income is, such a tax could not be paid, because the property could not be spared; and on the other hand, suppose a very trifling tax was laid, to be collected in *pearls*, such a tax likewise could not be paid, because they could not be had. Now any person may see that these are distinct cases, and the latter of them is a representation of our own.

That the difficulty cannot proceed from the former, that is, from the real value or weight of the tax, is evident at the first view to any person who will consider it.

The amount of the quota of taxes for this State for the year, 1780, (and so in proportion for every other State,) is twenty millions of dollars, which at

seventy for one,[1] is but sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds three shillings sterling, and on an average, is no more than three shillings and five pence sterling per head, per annum, per man, woman and child, or threepence two-fifths per head per month. Now here is a clear, positive fact, that cannot be contradicted, and which proves that the difficulty cannot be in the weight of the tax, for in itself it is a trifle, and far from being adequate to our quota of the expense of the war. The quit-rents of one penny sterling per acre on only one half of the state, come to upwards of fifty thousand pounds, which is almost as much as all the taxes of the present year, and as those quit-rents made no part of the taxes then paid, and are now discontinued, the quantity of money drawn for public service this year, exclusive of the militia fines, which I shall take notice of in the process of this work, is less than what was paid and payable in any year preceding the revolution, and since the last war; what I mean is, that the quit-rents and taxes taken together came to a larger sum then, than the present taxes without the quit-rents do now.

My intention by these arguments and calculations is to place the difficulty to the right cause, and show that it does not proceed from the weight or worth

[1] This was depreciation of Pennsylvania currency.—*Editor.*

of the tax, but from the scarcity of the medium in which it is paid; and to illustrate this point still further, I shall now show, that if the tax of twenty millions of dollars was of four times the real value it now is, or nearly so, which would be about two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling, and would be our full quota, this sum would have been raised with more ease, and have been less felt, than the present sum of only sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds.

The convenience or inconvenience of paying a tax in money arises from the quantity of money that can be spared out of trade.

When the emissions stopped, the continent was left in possession of two hundred millions of dollars, perhaps as equally dispersed as it was possible for trade to do it. And as no more was to be issued, the rise or fall of prices could neither increase nor diminish the quantity. It therefore remained the same through all the fluctuations of trade and exchange.

Now had the exchange stood at twenty for one, which was the rate Congress calculated upon when they arranged the quota of the several states, the latter end of last year, trade would have been carried on for nearly four times less money than it is now, and consequently the twenty millions would have

been spared with much greater ease, and when collected would have been of almost four times the value that they now are. And on the other hand, was the depreciation to be ninety or one hundred for one, the quantity required for trade would be more than at sixty or seventy for one, and though the value of them would be less, the difficulty of sparing the money out of trade would be greater. And on these facts and arguments I rest the matter, to prove that it is not the want of property, but the scarcity of the medium by which the proportion of property for taxation is to be measured out, that makes the embarrassment which we lie under. There is not money enough, and, what is equally as true, the people will not let there be money enough.

While I am on the subject of the currency, I shall offer one remark which will appear true to everybody, and can be accounted for by nobody, which is, that the better the times were, the worse the money grew; and the worse the times were, the better the money stood. It never depreciated by any advantage obtained by the enemy. The troubles of 1776, and the loss of Philadelphia in 1777, made no sensible impression on it, and every one knows that the surrender of Charleston did not produce the least alteration in the rate of exchange, which, for long before, and for

more than three months after, stood at sixty for one. It seems as if the certainty of its being our own, made us careless of its value, and that the most distant thoughts of losing it made us hug it the closer, like something we were loth to part with; or that we depreciate it for our pastime, which, when called to seriousness by the enemy, we leave off to renew again at our leisure. In short, our good luck seems to break us, and our bad makes us whole.

Passing on from this digression, I shall now endeavor to bring into one view the several parts which I have already stated, and form thereon some propositions, and conclude.

I have placed before the reader, the average tax per head, paid by the people of England; which is forty shillings sterling.

And I have shown the rate on an average per head, which will defray all the expenses of the war to us, and support the several governments without running the country into debt, which is thirteen shillings and four pence.

I have shown what the peace establishment may be conducted for, viz., an eighth part of what it would be, if under the government of Britain.

And I have likewise shown what the average per head of the present taxes is, namely, three shillings

and fivepence sterling, or threepence two-fifths per month; and that their whole yearly value, in sterling, is only sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds. Whereas our quota, to keep the payments equal with the expenses, is two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Consequently, there is a deficiency of one hundred and eighty-five thousand seven hundred and twenty pounds, and the same proportion of defect, according to the several quotas, happens in every other state. And this defect is the cause why the army has been so indifferently fed, clothed and paid. It is the cause, likewise, of the nerveless state of the campaign, and the insecurity of the country. Now, if a tax equal to thirteen and fourpence per head, will remove all these difficulties, and make people secure in their homes, leave them to follow the business of their stores and farms unmolested, and not only drive out but keep out the enemy from the country; and if the neglect of raising this sum will let them in, and produce the evils which might be prevented—on which side, I ask, does the wisdom, interest and policy lie? Or, rather, would it not be an insult to reason, to put the question? The sum, when proportioned out according to the several abilities of the people, can hurt no one, but an inroad from the enemy ruins hundreds of families.

Look at the destruction done in this city [Philadelphia]. The many houses totally destroyed, and others damaged; the waste of fences in the country round it, besides the plunder of furniture, forage, and provisions. I do not suppose that half a million sterling would reinstate the sufferers; and, does this, I ask, bear any proportion to the expense that would make us secure? The damage, on an average, is at least ten pounds sterling per head, which is as much as thirteen shillings and fourpence per head comes to for fifteen years. The same has happened on the frontiers, and in the Jerseys, New York, and other places where the enemy has been—Carolina and Georgia are likewise suffering the same fate.

That the people generally do not understand the insufficiency of the taxes to carry on the war, is evident, not only from common observation, but from the construction of several petitions which were presented to the Assembly of this state, against the recommendation of Congress of the 18th of March last, for taking up and funding the present currency at forty to one, and issuing new money in its stead. The prayer of the petition was, *that the currency might be appreciated by taxes* (meaning the present taxes) *and that part of the taxes be applied to the support of the army, if the army could not be other-*

wise supported. Now it could not have been possible for such a petition to have been presented, had the petitioners known, that so far from *part* of the taxes being sufficient for the support of the army, the *whole* of them falls three-fourths short of the year's expenses.

Before I proceed to propose methods by which a sufficiency of money may be raised, I shall take a short view of the general state of the country.

Notwithstanding the weight of the war, the ravages of the enemy, and the obstructions she has thrown in the way of trade and commerce, so soon does a young country outgrow misfortune, that America has already surmounted many that heavily oppressed her. For the first year or two of the war, we were shut up within our ports, scarce venturing to look towards the ocean. Now our rivers are beautified with large and valuable vessels, our stores filled with merchandise, and the produce of the country has a ready market, and an advantageous price. Gold and silver, that for a while seemed to have retreated again within the bowels of the earth, have once more risen into circulation, and every day adds new strength to trade, commerce and agriculture. In a pamphlet, written by Sir John Dalrymple, and dispersed in America in the year 1775, he asserted that *two twenty-*

gun ships, nay, says he, tenders of those ships, stationed between Albermarle sound and Chesapeake bay, would shut up the trade of America for 600 *miles.* How little did Sir John Dalrymple know of the abilities of America!

While under the government of Britain, the trade of this country was loaded with restrictions. It was only a few foreign ports which we were allowed to sail to. Now it is otherwise; and allowing that the quantity of trade is but half what it was before the war, the case must show the vast advantage of an open trade, because the present quantity under her restrictions could not support itself; from which I infer, that if half the quantity without the restrictions can bear itself up nearly, if not quite, as well as the whole when subject to them, how prosperous must the condition of America be when the whole shall return open with all the world. By the trade I do not mean the employment of a merchant only, but the whole interest and business of the country taken collectively.

It is not so much my intention, by this publication, to propose particular plans for raising money, as it is to show the necessity and the advantages to be derived from it. My principal design is to form the disposition of the people to the measures which I am

fully persuaded it is their interest and duty to adopt, and which need no other force to accomplish them than the force of being felt. But as every hint may be useful, I shall throw out a sketch, and leave others to make such improvements upon it as to them may appear reasonable.

The annual sum wanted is two millions, and the average rate in which it falls, is thirteen shillings and fourpence per head.

Suppose, then, that we raise half the sum and sixty thousand pounds over. The average rate thereof will be seven shillings per head.

In this case we shall have half the supply that we want, and an annual fund of sixty thousand pounds whereon to borrow the other million; because sixty thousand pounds is the interest of a million at six per cent.; and if at the end of another year we should be obliged, by the continuance of the war, to borrow another million, the taxes will be increased to seven shillings and sixpence; and thus for every million borrowed, an additional tax, equal to sixpence per head, must be levied.

The sum to be raised next year will be one million and sixty thousand pounds: one half of which I would propose should be raised by duties on imported goods, and prize goods, and the other half by a tax on landed

property and houses, or such other means as each state may devise.

But as the duties on imports and prize goods must be the same in all the states, therefore the rate per cent., or what other form the duty shall be laid, must be ascertained and regulated by Congress, and ingrafted in that form into the law of each state; and the monies arising therefrom carried into the treasury of each state. The duties to be paid in gold or silver.

There are many reasons why a duty on imports is the most convenient duty or tax that can be collected; one of which is, because the whole is payable in a few places in a country, and it likewise operates with the greatest ease and equality, because as every one pays in proportion to what he consumes, so people in general consume in proportion to what they can afford; and therefore the tax is regulated by the abilities which every man supposes himself to have, or in other words, every man becomes his own assessor, and pays by a little at a time, when it suits him to buy. Besides, it is a tax which people may pay or let alone by not consuming the articles; and though the alternative may have no influence on their conduct, the power of choosing is an agreeable thing to the mind. For my own part, it would be a satis-

faction to me was there a duty on all sorts of liquors during the war, as in my idea of things it would be an addition to the pleasures of society to know, that when the health of the army goes round, a few drops from every glass becomes theirs. How often have I heard an emphatical wish, almost accompanied by a tear, "*Oh, that our poor fellows in the field had some of this!*" Why then need we suffer under a fruitless sympathy, when there is a way to enjoy both the wish and the entertainment at once.

But the great national policy of putting a duty upon imports is, that it either keeps the foreign trade in our own hands, or draws something for the defence of the country from every foreigner who participates in it with us.

Thus much for the first half of the taxes, and as each state will best devise means to raise the other half, I shall confine my remarks to the resources of this state.

The quota, then, of this state, of one million and sixty thousand pounds, will be one hundred and thirty-three thousand two hundred and fifty pounds, the half of which is sixty-six thousand six hundred and twenty-five pounds; and supposing one fourth part of Pennsylvania inhabited, then a tax of one bushel of wheat on every twenty acres of land, one

with another, would produce the sum, and all the present taxes to cease. Whereas, the tithes of the bishops and clergy in England, exclusive of the taxes, are upwards of half a bushel of wheat on *every single* acre of land, good and bad, throughout the nation.

In the former part of this paper, I mentioned the militia fines, but reserved speaking of the matter, which I shall now do. The ground I shall put it upon is, that two millions sterling a year will support a sufficient army, and all the expenses of war and government, without having recourse to the inconvenient method of continually calling men from their employments, which, of all others, is the most expensive and the least substantial. I consider the revenues created by taxes as the first and principal thing, and fines only as secondary and accidental things. It was not the intention of the militia law to apply the fines to anything else but the support of the militia, neither do they produce any revenue to the state, yet these fines amount to more than all the taxes: for taking the muster-roll to be sixty thousand men, the fine on forty thousand who may not attend, will be sixty thousand pounds sterling, and those who muster, will give up a portion of time equal to half that sum, and if the eight classes should be called within the year, and one third turn out, the fine on

the remaining forty thousand would amount to seventy-two millions of dollars, besides the fifteen shillings on every hundred pounds of property, and the charge of seven and a half per cent. for collecting, in certain instances which, on the whole, would be upwards of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling.

Now if those very fines disable the country from raising a sufficient revenue without producing an equivalent advantage, would it not be for the ease and interest of all parties to increase the revenue, in the manner I have proposed, or any better, if a better can be devised, and cease the operation of the fines? I would still keep the militia as an organized body of men, and should there be a real necessity to call them forth, pay them out of the proper revenues of the state, and increase the taxes a third or fourth per cent. on those who do not attend. My limits will not allow me to go further into this matter, which I shall therefore close with this remark; that fines are, of all modes of revenue, the most unsuited to the minds of a free country. When a man pays a tax, he knows that the public necessity requires it, and therefore feels a pride in discharging his duty; but a fine seems an atonement for neglect of duty, and of consequence

is paid with discredit, and frequently levied with severity.

I have now only one subject more to speak of, with which I shall conclude, which is, the resolve of Congress of the 18th of March last, for taking up and funding the present currency at forty for one, and issuing new money in its stead.

Every one knows that I am not the flatterer of Congress, but in this instance *they are right;* and if that measure is supported, the currency will acquire a value, which, without it, it will not. But this is not all: it will give relief to the finances until such time as they can be properly arranged, and save the country from being immediately doubled taxed under the present mode. In short, support that measure, and it will support you.

I have now waded through a tedious course of difficult business, and over an untrodden path. The subject, on every point in which it could be viewed, was entangled with perplexities, and enveloped in obscurity, yet such are the resources of America, that she wants nothing but system to secure success.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 4, 1780.

P. S. While this paper was preparing for the press, the treachery of General Arnold became known, and engrossed the attention and conversation of the public; and that, not so much on account of the traitor as the magnitude of the treason, and the providence evident in the discovery. The matter, as far as it is at present known, is thus briefly related:

General Arnold about six weeks before had obtained the command of the important post of West Point, situated on the North River, about sixty miles above New York, and an hundred below Albany, there being no other defenceable pass between it and the last mentioned place. At what time, or in what manner, he first entered into a negotiation with the enemy for betraying the fort and garrison into their hands, does not yet appear.

While Arnold commanded at West Point, General Washington and the Minister of France went to Hartford in Connecticut, to consult on matters, in concert with Admiral Terney, commander of the French fleet stationed at Rhode Island. In the mean time Arnold held a conference with Major André, Adjutant-General to General Clinton, whom he traitorously furnished with plans of the fort, state of the garrison, minutes of the last council of war, and the manner in which he would post the troops when the enemy

should attempt a surprise; and then gave him a pass, by the name of Mr. John Anderson, to go to the lines at the White Plains or lower, if he Mr. Anderson thought proper, he being (the pass said) on public business.

Thus furnished André parted from Arnold, set off for New York, and had nearly arrived at the extent of our lines, when he was stopped by a party of militia, to whom he produced his pass, but they, not being satisfied with his account, insisted on taking him before the commanding officer, Lieut. Col. Jamieson. Finding himself in this situation, and hoping to escape by a bribe, he offered them his purse, watch and a promise of any quantity of goods they would accept, which these honest men nobly and virtuously scorned, and confident with their duty took him to the proper officer. On examination there was found on him the above mentioned papers and several others, all in the handwriting of General Arnold, and finding himself thus detected, he confessed his proper name and character. He was accordingly made a close prisoner, and the papers sent off by express to West Point, at which place General Washington had arrived soon after the arrival of the packet. On this disclosure, he went in quest of Arnold, whom he had not seen that day, but all that could be learned was

that Arnold had received a letter some short time before which had much confused him, since which he had disappeared. Colonel Hamilton, one of General Washington's aids, with some others were sent after him, but he, having the start, eluded the pursuit, took boat under pretence of a flag, and got on board the *Vulture* sloop of war lying in the North River; on which it may be truly said, that one vulture was receiving another. From on board this vessel he addressed a letter to General Washington, which, in whatever light it may be viewed, confirms him a finished villain.

The true character of Arnold is that of a desperado. His whole life has been a life of jobs; and where either plunder or profit was the object, no danger deterred, no principle restrained him. In his person he was smart and active, somewhat diminutive, weak in his capacities and trifling in his conversation; and though gallant in the field, was defective in the talents necessary for command. The early convulsion of the times afforded him an introduction into life, to the elegance of which he was before a stranger, and the eagerness of the public to reward and encourage enterprise, procured him at once both applause and promotion. His march to Quebec gave him fame, and the plunder of Montreal put the first stamp to

his public character. His behavior, at Danbury and Saratoga once more covered over his crimes, which again broke forth in the plunder of Philadelphia, under pretence of supplying the army. From this time, the true spring of his conduct being known, he became both disregarded and disesteemed, and this last instance of his treachery has proved the public judgment right.

When we take a review of the history of former times it will turn out to the honor of America that, notwithstanding the trying variety of her situation, this is the only instance of defection in a general officer; and even in this case, the unshaken honesty of those who detected him heightens the national character, to which his apostasy serves as a foil. From the nature of his crime, and his disposition to monopolize, it is reasonable to conclude he had few or no *direct* accomplices. His sole object was to make a monied bargain; and to be consistent with himself, he would as readily betray the side he has deserted to, as that he deserted from.

But there is one reflection results from this black business that deserves notice, which is that it shows the declining power of the enemy. An attempt to bribe is a sacrifice of military fame, and a confession

of inability to conquer; as a proud people they ought to be above it, and as soldiers to despise it; and however they may feel on the occasion, the world at large will despise them for it, and consider America superior to their arms.

C. S.

THE AMERICAN CRISIS

X

On the King of England's Speech

IMPORTANT events had transpired in the interval between the writing of this number of the "Crisis" and the preceding one. The most momentous occurrence was the surrender of Cornwallis, with his entire army, at Yorktown. The British General made a speech, and it is to this martial utterance (which Paine calls "mournful" and "snivelling") that the author devotes most of this instalment.

Paine refers to the failure of the attempt of a little island to conquer a continent, and points out the unenviable position in which Britain was placed, while America had gained universal respect by her part in the conflict.

Lord North, the English Prime Minister, resigned soon after the surrender of Cornwallis; and King George the Third, writing to him at the opening of Parliament, April 21, 1782, described himself as "a mind truly torn to pieces."

OF all the innocent passions which actuate the human mind there is none more universally prevalent than curiosity. It reaches all mankind, and in matters which concern us, or concern us not, it alike provokes in us a desire to know them.

Although the situation of America, superior to every effort to enslave her, and daily rising to importance and opulence, has placed her above the region of anxiety, it has still left her within the circle of curiosity; and her fancy to see the speech of a man who had proudly threatened to bring her to

his feet, was visibly marked with that tranquil confidence which cared nothing about its contents. It was inquired after with a smile, read with a laugh, and dismissed with disdain.

But, as justice is due, even to an enemy, it is right to say, that the speech is as well managed as the embarrassed condition of their affairs could well admit of; and though hardly a line of it is true, except the mournful story of Cornwallis, it may serve to amuse the deluded commons and people of England, for whom it was calculated.

"The war," says the speech, "is still unhappily prolonged by that restless ambition which first excited our enemies to commence it, and which still continues to disappoint my earnest wishes and diligent exertions to restore the public tranquillity."

How easy it is to abuse truth and language, when men, by habitual wickedness, have learned to set justice at defiance. That the very man who began the war, who with the most sullen insolence refused to answer, and even to hear the humblest of all petitions, who has encouraged his officers and his army in the most savage cruelties, and the most scandalous plunderings, who has stirred up the Indians on one side, and the negroes on the other, and invoked every aid of hell in his behalf, should now, with an affected

air of pity, turn the tables from himself, and charge to another the wickedness that is his own, can only be equalled by the baseness of the heart that spoke it.

To be nobly wrong is more manly than to be meanly right, is an expression I once used on a former occasion,[1] and it is equally applicable now. We feel something like respect for consistency even in error. We lament the virtue that is debauched into a vice, but the vice that affects a virtue becomes the more detestable: and amongst the various assumptions of character, which hypocrisy has taught, and men have practised, there is none that raises a higher relish of disgust, than to see disappointed inveteracy twisting itself, by the most visible falsehoods, into an appearance of piety which it has no pretensions to.

"But I should not," continues the speech, "answer the trust committed to the sovereign of a *free people*, nor make a suitable return to my subjects for their constant, zealous, and affectionate attachment to my person, family and government, if I consented to sacrifice, either to my own desire of peace, or to their temporary ease and relief, *those essential rights and permanent interests*, upon the maintenance and preservation of which, the future strength and security of this country must principally depend."

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[1] This is the opening sentence of "The Forester's" first letter to "Cato."—*Editor.*

That the man whose ignorance and obstinacy first involved and still continues the nation in the most hopeless and expensive of all wars, should now meanly flatter them with the name of a *free people*, and make a merit of his crime, under the disguise of their essential rights and permanent interests, is something which disgraces even the character of perverseness. Is he afraid they will send him to Hanover, or what does he fear? Why is the sycophant thus added to the hypocrite, and the man who pretends to govern, sunk into the humble and submissive memorialist?

What those essential rights and permanent interests are, on which the future strength and security of England must principally *depend*, are not so much as alluded to. They are words which impress nothing but the ear, and are calculated only for the sound.

But if they have any reference to America, then do they amount to the disgraceful confession, that England, who once assumed to be her protectress, has now become her *dependant*. The British king and ministry are constantly holding up the vast importance which America is of to England, in order to allure the nation to carry on the war: now, whatever ground there is for this idea, it ought to have operated as a reason for not beginning it; and, therefore, they

support their present measures to their own disgrace, because the arguments which they now use, are a direct reflection on their former policy.

"The favorable appearance of affairs," continues the speech, "in the East Indies, and the safe arrival of the numerous commercial fleets of my kingdom, must have given you satisfaction."

That things are not *quite* so bad every where as in America may be some cause of consolation, but can be none for triumph. One broken leg is better than two, but still it is not a source of joy: and let the appearance of affairs in the East Indies be ever so favorable, they are nevertheless worse than at first, without a prospect of their ever being better. But the mournful story of Cornwallis was yet to be told, and it was necessary to give it the softest introduction possible.

"But in the course of this year," continues the speech, "my assiduous endeavors to guard the extensive dominions of my crown have not been attended with success equal to the justice and uprightness of my views."—What justice and uprightness there was in beginning a war with America, the world will judge of, and the unequalled barbarity with which it has been conducted, is not to be worn from the memory by the cant of snivelling hypocrisy.

"And it is with *great concern* that I inform you that the events of war have been very unfortunate to my arms in Virginia, having ended in the loss of my forces in that province."—And *our* great concern is that they are not all served in the same manner.

"No endeavors have been wanted on my part," says the speech, "to extinguish that spirit of rebellion which our enemies have found means to foment and maintain in the colonies; and to restore to my *deluded subjects* in America that happy and prosperous condition which they formerly derived from a due obedience to the laws."

The expression of *deluded subjects* is become so hacknied and contemptible, and the more so when we see them making prisoners of whole armies at a time, that the pride of not being laughed at would induce a man of common sense to leave it off. But the most offensive falsehood in the paragraph is the attributing the prosperity of America to a wrong cause. It was the unremitted industry of the settlers and their descendants, the hard labor and toil of persevering fortitude, that were the true causes of the prosperity of America. The former tyranny of England served to people it, and the virtue of the adventurers to improve it. Ask the man, who, with his axe, has cleared a way in the wilderness, and now possesses an estate, what made him rich, and he will tell you the labor of his hands, the sweat of his brow, and

the blessing of heaven. Let Britain but leave America to herself and she asks no more. She has risen into greatness without the knowledge and against the will of England, and has a right to the unmolested enjoyment of her own created wealth.

"I will order," says the speech, "the estimates of the ensuing year to be laid before you. I rely on your wisdom and public spirit for such supplies as the circumstances of our affairs shall be found to require. Among the many ill consequences which attend the continuation of the present war, I most sincerely regret the additional burdens which it must unavoidably bring upon my faithful subjects."

It is strange that a nation must run through such a labyrinth of trouble, and expend such a mass of wealth to gain the wisdom which an hour's reflection might have taught. The final superiority of America over every attempt that an island might make to conquer her, was as naturally marked in the constitution of things, as the future ability of a giant over a dwarf is delineated in his features while an infant. How far providence, to accomplish purposes which no human wisdom could foresee, permitted such extraordinary errors, is still a secret in the womb of time, and must remain so till futurity shall give it birth.

"In the prosecution of this great and important contest," says the speech, "in which we are engaged, I retain a firm

confidence in the *protection of divine providence*, and a perfect conviction in the justice of my cause, and I have no doubt, but, that by the concurrence and support of my Parliament, by the valour of my fleets and armies, and by a vigorous, animated, and united exertion of the faculties and resources of my people, I shall be enabled to restore the blessings of a safe and honorable peace to all my dominions."

The King of England is one of the readiest believers in the world. In the beginning of the contest he passed an act to put America out of the protection of the crown of England, and though providence, for seven years together, has put him out of *her* protection, still the man has no doubt. Like Pharaoh on the edge of the Red Sea, he sees not the plunge he is making, and precipitately drives across the flood that is closing over his head.

I think it is a reasonable supposition, that this part of the speech was composed before the arrival of the news of the capture of Cornwallis: for it certainly has no relation to their condition at the time it was spoken. But, be this as it may, it is nothing to us. Our line is fixed. Our lot is cast; and America, the child of fate, is arriving at maturity. We have nothing to do but by a spirited and quick exertion, to stand prepared for war or peace. Too great to yield, and too noble to insult; superior to misfortune, and

generous in success, let us untaintedly preserve the character which we have gained, and show to future ages an example of unequalled magnanimity. There is something in the cause and consequence of America that has drawn on her the attention of all mankind. The world has seen her brave. Her love of liberty; her ardour in supporting it; the justice of her claims, and the constancy of her fortitude have won her the esteem of Europe, and attached to her interest the first power in that country.

Her situation now is such, that to whatever point, past, present or to come, she casts her eyes, new matter rises to convince her that she is right. In her conduct towards her enemy, no reproachful sentiment lurks in secret. No sense of injustice is left upon the mind. Untainted with ambition, and a stranger to revenge, her progress has been marked by providence, and she, in every stage of the conflict, has blest her with success.

But let not America wrap herself up in delusive hope and suppose the business done. The least remissness in preparation, the least relaxation in execution, will only serve to prolong the war, and increase expenses. If our enemies can draw consolation from misfortune, and exert themselves upon despair, how much more ought we, who are to win a continent by

the conquest, and have already an earnest of success?

Having, in the preceding part, made my remarks on the several matters which the speech contains, I shall now make my remarks on what it does not contain.

There is not a syllable in its respecting alliances. Either the injustice of Britain is too glaring, or her condition too desperate, or both, for any neighboring power to come to her support. In the beginning of the contest, when she had only America to contend with, she hired assistance from Hesse, and other smaller states of Germany, and for nearly three years did America, young, raw, undisciplined and unprovided, stand against the power of Britain, aided by twenty thousand foreign troops, and made a complete conquest of one entire army. The remembrance of those things ought to inspire us with confidence and greatness of mind, and carry us through every remaining difficulty with content and cheerfulness. What are the little sufferings of the present day, compared with the hardships that are past? There was a time, when we had neither house nor home in safety; when every hour was the hour of alarm and danger; when the mind, tortured with anxiety, knew no repose, and every thing, but hope and fortitude, was bidding us farewell.

It is of use to look back upon these things; to call to mind the times of trouble and the scenes of complicated anguish that are past and gone. Then every expense was cheap, compared with the dread of conquest and the misery of submission. We did not stand debating upon trifles, or contending about the necessary and unavoidable charges of defence. Every one bore his lot of suffering, and looked forward to happier days, and scenes of rest.

Perhaps one of the greatest dangers which any country can be exposed to, arises from a kind of trifling which sometimes steals upon the mind, when it supposes the danger past; and this unsafe situation marks at this time the peculiar crisis of America. What would she once have given to have known that her condition at this day should be what it now is? And yet we do not seem to place a proper value upon it, nor vigorously pursue the necessary measures to secure it. We know that we cannot be defended, nor yet defend ourselves, without trouble and expense. We have no right to expect it; neither ought we to look for it. We are a people, who, in our situation, differ from all the world. We form one common floor of public good, and, whatever is our charge, it is paid for our own interest and upon our own account.

Misfortune and experience have now taught us system and method; and the arrangements for carrying on the war are reduced to rule and order. The quotas of the several states are ascertained, and I intend in a future publication to show what they are, and the necessity as well as the advantages of vigorously providing for them.

In the mean time, I shall conclude this paper with an instance of *British clemency*, from Smollett's History of England, vol. xi., p. 239, printed in London. It will serve to show how dismal the situation of a conquered people is, and that the only security is an effectual defence.

We all know that the Stuart family and the house of Hanover opposed each other for the crown of England. The Stuart family stood first in the line of succession, but the other was the most successful.

In July, 1745, Charles, the son of the exiled king, landed in Scotland, collected a small force, at no time exceeding five or six thousand men, and made some attempts to re-establish his claim. The late Duke of Cumberland, uncle to the present King of England, was sent against him, and on the 16th of April following, Charles was totally defeated at Culloden, in Scotland. Success and power are the only situations in which clemency can be shown, and those who

are cruel, because they are victorious, can with the same facility act any other degenerate character.

"Immediately after the decisive action at Culloden, the Duke of Cumberland took possession of Inverness; where six and thirty deserters, convicted by a court martial, were ordered to be executed: then he detached several parties to ravage the country. One of these apprehended The Lady Mackintosh, who was sent prisoner to Inverness, plundered her house, and drove away her cattle, though her husband was actually in the service of the government. The castle of Lord Lovat was destroyed. The French prisoners were sent to Carlisle and Penrith: Kilmarnock, Balmerino, Cromartie, and his son, The Lord Macleod, were conveyed by sea to London; and those of an inferior rank were confined in different prisons. The Marquis of Tullibardine, together with a brother of the Earl of Dunmore, and Murray, the pretender's secretary, were seized and transported to the Tower of London, to which the Earl of Traquaire had been committed on suspicion; and the eldest son of Lord Lovat was imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh. In a word, all the jails in Great Britain, from the capital, northwards, were filled with those unfortunate captives; and great numbers of them were crowded together in the holds of ships, where they perished in the most deplorable manner, for want of air and exercise. Some rebel chiefs escaped in two French frigates that arrived on the coast of Lochaber about the end of April, and engaged three vessels belonging to his Britannic majesty, which they obliged to retire. Others embarked on board a ship on the coast of Buchan, and were conveyed to Norway, from whence they travelled to Sweden. In the month of May, the Duke of Cumberland advanced with the army into the Highlands, as far as Fort Augustus,

where he encamped; and sent off detachments on all hands, to hunt down the fugitives, and lay waste the country with fire and sword. The castles of Glengary and Lochiel were plundered and burned; every house, hut, or habitation, met with the same fate, without distinction; and all the cattle and provision were carried off; the men were either shot upon the mountains, like wild beasts, or put to death in cold blood, without form of trial; the women, after having seen their husbands and fathers murdered, were subjected to brutal violation, and then turned out naked, with their children, to starve on the barren heaths. One whole family was enclosed in a barn, and consumed to ashes. Those ministers of vengeance were so alert in the execution of their office, that in a few days there was neither house, cottage, man, nor beast, to be seen within the compass of fifty miles; all was ruin, silence, and desolation."

I have here presented the reader with one of the most shocking instances of cruelty ever practised, and I leave it, to rest on his mind, that he may be fully impressed with a sense of the destruction he has escaped, in case Britain had conquered America; and likewise, that he may see and feel the necessity, as well for his own personal safety, as for the honor, the interest, and happiness of the whole community, to omit or delay no one preparation necessary to secure the ground which we so happily stand upon.

To the People of America

On the expenses, arrangements and disbursements for carrying on the war, and finishing it with honor and advantage

WHEN any necessity or occasion has pointed out the convenience of addressing the public, I have never made it a consideration whether the subject was popular or unpopular, but whether it was right or wrong; for that which is right will become popular, and that which is wrong, though by mistake it may obtain the cry or fashion of the day, will soon lose the power of delusion, and sink into disesteem.

A remarkable instance of this happened in the case of Silas Deane; and I mention this circumstance with the greater ease, because the poison of his hypocrisy spread over the whole country, and every man, almost without exception, thought me wrong in opposing him. The best friends I then had, except Mr. [Henry] Laurens, stood at a distance, and this tribute, which is due to his constancy, I pay to him with respect, and that the readier, because he is not here to hear it. If it reaches him in his imprisonment, it will afford him an agreeable reflection.

"*As he rose like a rocket, he would fall like a stick,*" is a metaphor which I applied to Mr. Deane, in the

first piece which I published respecting him, and he has exactly fulfilled the description. The credit he so unjustly obtained from the public, he lost in almost as short a time. The delusion perished as it fell, and he soon saw himself stripped of popular support. His more intimate acquaintances began to doubt, and to desert him long before he left America, and at his departure, he saw himself the object of general suspicion. When he arrived in France, he endeavored to effect by treason what he had failed to accomplish by fraud. His plans, schemes and projects, together with his expectation of being sent to Holland to negotiate a loan of money, had all miscarried. He then began traducing and accusing America of every crime, which could injure her reputation. "That she was a ruined country; that she only meant to make a tool of France, to get what money she could out of her, and then to leave her and accommodate with Britain." Of all which and much more, Colonel Laurens and myself, when in France, informed Dr. Franklin, who had not before heard of it.[1] And to complete the character of traitor, he has, by letters to his country since, some of which, in his own handwriting, are

[1] Paine visited France early in 1781 as Secretary for Col. John Laurens, and obtained from that country six millions of livres, with clothing and military stores, which supplies resulted in the defeat of Cornwallis.—*Editor.*

now in the possession of Congress, used every expression and argument in his power, to injure the reputation of France, and to advise America to renounce her alliance, and surrender up her independence.* Thus in France he abuses America, and in his letters to America he abuses France; and is endeavoring to create disunion between two countries, by the same arts of double-dealing by which he caused dissensions among the commissioners in Paris, and distractions in America. But his life has been fraud, and his character has been that of a plodding, plotting, cringing mercenary, capable of any disguise that suited his purpose. His final detection has very happily cleared up those mistakes, and removed that uneasiness, which his unprincipled conduct occasioned. Every one now sees him in the same light; for towards friends or enemies he acted with the same deception and injustice, and his name, like that of *Arnold*,

* Mr. William Marshall, of this city [Philadelphia], formerly a pilot, who had been taken at sea and carried to England, and got from thence to France, brought over letters from Mr. Deane to America, one of which was directed to "Robert Morris, Esq." Mr. Morris sent it unopened to Congress, and advised Mr. Marshall to deliver the others there, which he did. The letters were of the same purport with those which have been already published under the signature of S. Deane, to which they had frequent reference.—*Author.*

ought now to be forgotten among us.[1] As this is the first time that I have mentioned him since my return from France, it is my intention that it shall be the last. From this digression, which for several reasons I thought necessary to give, I now proceed to the purport of my address.

I consider the war of America against Britain as the country's war, the public's war, or the war of the people in their own behalf, for the security of their natural rights, and the protection of their own property. It is not the war of Congress, the war of the assemblies, or the war of government in any line whatever. The country first, by mutual compact, resolved to defend their rights and maintain their independence, *at the hazard of their lives and fortunes;* they elected their representatives, by whom they appointed their members of Congress, and said, *act you for us, and we will support you.* This is the true ground and principle of the war on the part of America, and, consequently, there remains nothing to do, but for every one to fulfil his obligation.

It was next to impossible that a new country, engaged in a new undertaking, could set off system-

[1] Silas Deane was in London associating with Benedict Arnold. The extent of his treason was not known until the publication in 1867 of George the Third's correspondence in 1867.—*Editor.*

atically right at first. She saw not the extent of the struggle that she was involved in, neither could she avoid the beginning. She supposed every step that she took, and every resolution which she formed, would bring her enemy to reason and close the contest. Those failing, she was forced into new measures; and these, like the former, being fitted to her expectations, and failing in their turn, left her continually unprovided, and without system. The enemy, likewise, was induced to prosecute the war, from the temporary expedients we adopted for carrying it on. We were continually expecting to see their credit exhausted, and they were looking to see our currency fail; and thus, between their watching us, and we them, the hopes of both have been deceived, and the childishness of the expectation has served to increase the expense.

Yet who, through this wilderness of error, has been to blame? Where is the man who can say the fault, in part, has not been his? They were the natural, unavoidable errors of the day. They were the errors of a whole country, which nothing but experience could detect and time remove. Neither could the circumstances of America admit of system, till either the paper currency was fixed or laid aside. No calcu-

lation of a finance could be made on a medium failing without reason, and fluctuating without rule.

But there is one error which might have been prevented and was not; and as it is not my custom to flatter, but to serve mankind, I will speak it freely. It certainly was the duty of every assembly on the continent to have known, at all times, what was the condition of its treasury, and to have ascertained at every period of depreciation, how much the real worth of the taxes fell short of their nominal value. This knowledge, which might have been easily gained, in the time of it, would have enabled them to have kept their constituents well informed, and this is one of the greatest duties of representation. They ought to have studied and calculated the expenses of the war, the quota of each state, and the consequent proportion that would fall on each man's property for his defence; and this must have easily shown to them, that a tax of one hundred pounds could not be paid by a bushel of apples or an hundred of flour, which was often the case two or three years ago. But instead of this, which would have been plain and upright dealing, the little line of temporary popularity, the feather of an hour's duration, was too much pursued; and in this involved condition of things, every state, for the want of a little thinking, or a little in-

formation, supposed that it supported the whole expenses of the war, when in fact it fell, by the time the tax was levied and collected, above three-fourths short of its own quota.

Impressed with a sense of the danger to which the country was exposed by this lax method of doing business, and the prevailing errors of the day, I published, last October was a twelvemonth, the *Crisis Extraordinary*, on the revenues of America, and the yearly expense of carrying on the war. My estimation of the latter, together with the civil list of Congress, and the civil list of the several states, was two million pounds sterling, which is very nearly nine millions of dollars.

Since that time, Congress have gone into a calculation, and have estimated the expenses of the War Department and the civil list of Congress (exclusive of the civil list of the several governments) at eight millions of dollars; and as the remaining million will be fully sufficient for the civil list of the several states, the two calculations are exceedingly near each other.

The sum of eight millions of dollars have called upon the states to furnish, and their quotas are as follows, which I shall preface with the resolution itself.

"*By the United States in Congress assembled.*

"*October* 30, 1781.

"*Resolved,* That the respective states be called upon to furnish the treasury of the United States with their quotas of eight millions of dollars, for the War Department and civil list for the ensuing year, to be paid quarterly, in equal proportions, the first payment to be made on the first day of April next.

"*Resolved,* That a committee, consisting of a member from each state, be appointed to apportion to the several states the quota of the above sum.

"November 2d. The committee appointed to ascertain the proportions of the several states of the monies to be raised for the expenses of the ensuing year, report the following resolutions:

"That the sum of eight millions of dollars, as required to be raised by the resolutions of the 30th of October last, be paid by the states in the following proportion:

New Hampshire	$ 373,598
Massachusetts	1,307,596
Rhode Island	216,684
Connecticut	747,196
New York	373,598
New Jersey	485,679
Pennsylvania	1,120,794
Delaware	112,085
Maryland	933,996
Virginia	1,307,594
North Carolina	622,677

South Carolina	373,598
Georgia	24,905
	$8,000,000

"*Resolved,* That it be recommended to the several states, to lay taxes for raising their quotas of money for the United States, separate from those laid for their own particular use."

On these resolutions I shall offer several remarks.

1st, On the sum itself, and the ability of the country.

2d, On the several quotas, and the nature of a union. And,

3d, On the manner of collection and expenditure.

1st, On the sum itself, and the ability of the country. As I know my own calculation is as low as possible, and as the sum called for by congress, according to their calculation, agrees very nearly therewith, I am sensible it cannot possibly be lower. Neither can it be done for that, unless there is ready money to go to market with; and even in that case, it is only by the utmost management and economy that it can be made to do.

By the accounts which were laid before the British Parliament last spring, it appeared that the charge of only subsisting, that is, feeding their army in America, cost annually four million pounds sterling, which

is very nearly eighteen millions of dollars. Now if, for eight millions, we can feed, clothe, arm, provide for, and pay an army sufficient for our defence, the very comparison shows that the money must be well laid out.

It may be of some use, either in debate or conversation, to attend to the progress of the expenses of an army, because it will enable us to see on what part any deficiency will fall.

The first thing is, to feed them and prepare for the sick.

Second, to clothe them.

Third, to arm and furnish them.

Fourth, to provide means for removing them from place to place. And,

Fifth, to pay them.

The first and second are absolutely necessary to them as men. The third and fourth are equally as necessary to them as an army. And the fifth is their just due. Now if the sum which shall be raised should fall short, either by the several acts of the states for raising it, or by the manner of collecting it, the deficiency will fall on the fifth head, the soldiers' pay, which would be defrauding them, and eternally disgracing ourselves. It would be a blot on the councils, the country, and the revolution of America, and

a man would hereafter be ashamed to own that he had any hand in it.

But if the deficiency should be still shorter, it would next fall on the fourth head, *the means of removing the army from place to place;* and, in this case, the army must either stand still where it can be of no use, or seize on horses, carts, wagons, or any means of transportation which it can lay hold of; and in this instance the country suffers. In short, every attempt to do a thing for less than it can be done for, is sure to become at last both a loss and a dishonor.

But the country cannot bear it, say some. This has been the most expensive doctrine that ever was held out, and cost America millions of money for nothing. Can the country bear to be overrun, ravaged, and ruined by an enemy? This will immediately follow where defence is wanting, and defence will ever be wanting where sufficient revenues are not provided. But this is only one part of the folly. The second is, that when the danger comes, invited in part by our not preparing against it, we have been obliged, in a number of instances, to expend double the sums to do that which at first might have been done for half the money. But this is not all. A third mischief has been, that grain of all sorts, flour, beef,

fodder, horses, carts, wagons, or whatever was absolutely or immediately wanted, have been taken without pay. Now, I ask, why was all this done, but from that extremely weak and expensive doctrine, *that the country could not bear it?* That is, that she could not bear, in the first instance, that which would have saved her twice as much at last; or, in proverbial language, that she could not bear to pay a penny to save a pound; the consequence of which has been, that she has paid a pound for a penny. Why are there so many unpaid certificates in almost every man's hands, but from the parsimony of not providing sufficient revenues? Besides, the doctrine contradicts itself; because, if the whole country cannot bear it, how is it possible that a part should? And yet this has been the case: for those things have been had; and they must be had; but the misfortune is, that they have been obtained in a very unequal manner, and upon expensive credit, whereas, with ready money, they might have been purchased for half the price, and nobody distressed.

But there is another thought which ought to strike us, which is, how is the army to bear the want of food, clothing and other necessaries? The man who is at home, can turn himself a thousand ways, and find as many means of ease, convenience or relief:

but a soldier's life admits of none of those: their wants cannot be supplied from themselves: for an army, though it is the defence of a state, is at the same time the child of a country, or must be provided for in every thing.

And lastly, the doctrine is false. There are not three millions of people in any part of the universe, who live so well, or have such a fund of ability, as in America. The income of a common laborer, who is industrious, is equal to that of the generality of tradesmen in England. In the mercantile line, I have not heard of one who could be said to be a bankrupt since the war began, and in England they have been without number. In America almost every farmer lives on his own lands, and in England not one in a hundred does. In short, it seems as if the poverty of that country had made them furious, and they were determined to risk all to recover all.

Yet, notwithstanding those advantages on the part of America, true it is, that had it not been for the operation of taxes for our necessary defence, we had sunk into a state of sloth and poverty: for there was more wealth lost by neglecting to till the earth in the years 1776, '77, and '78, than the quota of taxes amounts to. That which is lost by neglect of this kind, is lost for ever: whereas that which is paid, and

continues in the country, returns to us again; and at the same time that it provides us with defence, it operates not only as a spur, but as a premium to our industry.

I shall now proceed to the second head, viz., *on the several quotas, and the nature of a union.*

There was a time when America had no other bond of union, than that of common interest and affection. The whole country flew to the relief of Boston, and, making her cause their own, participated in her cares and administered to her wants. The fate of war, since that day, has carried the calamity in a ten-fold proportion to the southward; but in the mean time the union has been strengthened by a legal compact of the states, jointly and severally ratified, and that which before was choice, or the duty of affection, is now likewise the duty of legal obligation.

The union of America is the foundation-stone of her independence; the rock on which it is built; and is something so sacred in her constitution, that we ought to watch every word we speak, and every thought we think, that we injure it not, even by mistake. When a multitude, extended, or rather scattered, over a continent in the manner we were, mutually agree to form one common centre whereon the whole shall move to accomplish a particular pur-

pose, all parts must act together and alike, or act not at all, and a stoppage in any one is a stoppage of the whole, at least for a time.

Thus the several states have sent representatives to assemble together in Congress, and they have empowered that body, which thus becomes their centre, and are no other than themselves in representation, to conduct and manage the war, while their constituents at home attend to the domestic cares of the country, their internal legislation, their farms, professions or employments, for it is only by reducing complicated things to method and orderly connection that they can be understood with advantage, or pursued with success. Congress, by virtue of this delegation, estimates the expense, and apportions it out to the several parts of the empire according to their several abilities; and here the debate must end, because each state has already had its voice, and the matter has undergone its whole portion of argument, and can no more be altered by any particular state, than a law of any state, after it has passed, can be altered by any individual. For with respect to those things which immediately concern the union, and for which the union was purposely established, and is intended to secure, each state is to the United States what each individual is to the state he lives in. And it is on

this grand point, this movement upon one centre, that our existence as a nation, our happiness as a people, and our safety as individuals, depend.

It may happen that some state or other may be somewhat over or under rated, but this cannot be much. The experience which has been had upon the matter, has nearly ascertained their several abilities. But even in this case, it can only admit of an appeal to the United States, but cannot authorise any state to make the alteration itself, any more than our internal government can admit an individual to do so in the case of an act of assembly; for if one state can do it, then may another do the same, and the instant this is done the whole is undone.

Neither is it supposable that any single state can be a judge of all the comparative reasons which may influence the collective body in arranging the quotas of the continent. The circumstances of the several states are frequently varying, occasioned by the accidents of war and commerce, and it will often fall upon some to help others, rather beyond what their exact proportion at another time might be; but even this assistance is as naturally and politically included in the idea of a union as that of any particular assigned proportion; because we know not whose turn

it may be next to want assistance, for which reason that state is the wisest which sets the best example.

Though in matters of bounden duty and reciprocal affection, it is rather a degeneracy from the honesty and ardor of the heart to admit any thing selfish to partake in the government of our conduct, yet in cases where our duty, our affections, and our interest all coincide, it may be of some use to observe their union. The United States will become heir to an extensive quantity of vacant land, and their several titles to shares and quotas thereof, will naturally be adjusted according to their relative quotas, during the war, exclusive of that inability which may unfortunately arise to any state by the enemy's holding possession of a part; but as this is a cold matter of interest, I pass it by, and proceed to my third head, viz., *on the manner of collection and expenditure.*

It has been our error, as well as our misfortune, to blend the affairs of each state, especially in money matters, with those of the United States; whereas it is our case, convenience and interest, to keep them separate. The expenses of the United States for carrying on the war, and the expenses of each state for its own domestic government, are distinct things, and to involve them is a source of perplexity and a cloak for fraud. I love method, because I see and

am convinced of its beauty and advantage. It is that which makes all business easy and understood, and without which, everything becomes embarrassed and difficult.

There are certain powers which the people of each state have delegated to their legislative and executive bodies, and there are other powers which the people of every state have delegated to Congress, among which is that of conducting the war, and, consequently, of managing the expenses attending it; for how else can that be managed, which concerns every state, but by a delegation from each? When a state has furnished its quota, it has an undoubted right to know how it has been applied, and it is as much the duty of Congress to inform the state of the one, as it is the duty of the state to provide the other.

In the resolution of Congress already recited, it is recommended to the several states *to lay taxes for raising their quotas of money for the United States, separate from those laid for their own particular use.*

This is a most necessary point to be observed, and the distinction should follow all the way through. They should be levied, paid and collected, separately, and kept separate in every instance. Neither have the civil officers of any state, nor the government of that state, the least right to touch that money which

the people pay for the support of their army and the war, any more than Congress has to touch that which each state raises for its own use.

This distinction will naturally be followed by another. It will occasion every state to examine nicely into the expenses of its civil list, and to regulate, reduce, and bring it into better order than it has hitherto been; because the money for that purpose must be raised apart, and accounted for to the public separately. But while the monies of both were blended, the necessary nicety was not observed, and the poor soldier, who ought to have been the first, was the last who was thought of.

Another convenience will be, that the people, by paying the taxes separately, will know what they are for; and will likewise know that those which are for the defence of the country will cease with the war, or soon after. For although, as I have before observed, the war is their own, and for the support of their own rights and the protection of their own property, yet they have the same right to know, that they have to pay, and it is the want of not knowing that is often the cause of dissatisfaction.

This regulation of keeping the taxes separate has given rise to a regulation in the office of finance, by which it is directed:

"That the receivers shall, at the end of every month, make out an exact account of the monies received by them respectively, during such month, specifying therein the names of the persons from whom the same shall have been received, the dates and the sums; which account they shall respectively cause to be published in one of the newspapers of the state; to the end that every citizen may know how much of the monies collected from him, in taxes, is transmitted to the treasury of the United States for the support of the war; and also, that it may be known what monies have been at the order of the superintendent of finance. It being proper and necessary, that, in a free country, the people should be as fully informed of the administration of their affairs as the nature of things will admit."

It is an agreeable thing to see a spirit of order and economy taking place, after such a series of errors and difficulties. A government or an administration, who means and acts honestly, has nothing to fear, and consequently has nothing to conceal; and it would be of use if a monthly or quarterly account was to be published, as well of the expenditures as of the receipts. Eight millions of dollars must be husbanded with an exceeding deal of care to make it do, and, therefore, as the management must be reputable, the publication would be serviceable.

I have heard of petitions which have been presented to the assembly of this state (and probably the same may have happened in other states) praying to have the taxes lowered. Now the only way to keep

taxes low is, for the United States to have ready money to go to market with: and though the taxes to be raised for the present year will fall heavy, and there will naturally be some difficulty in paying them, yet the difficulty, in proportion as money spreads about the country, will every day grow less, and in the end we shall save some millions of dollars by it. We see what a bitter, revengeful enemy we have to deal with, and any expense is cheap compared to their merciless paw. We have seen the unfortunate Carolineans hunted like partridges on the mountains, and it is only by providing means for our defence, that we shall be kept from the same condition. When we think or talk about taxes, we ought to recollect that we lie down in peace and sleep in safety; that we can follow our farms or stores or other occupations, in prosperous tranquillity; and that these inestimable blessings are procured to us by the taxes that we pay. In this view, our taxes are properly our insurance money; they are what we pay to be made safe, and, in strict policy, are the best money we can lay out.

It was my intention to offer some remarks on the impost law of five per cent. recommended by Congress, and to be established as a fund for the payment of the loan-office certificates, and other debts of the

United States; but I have already extended my piece beyond my intention. And as this fund will make our system of finance complete, and is strictly just, and consequently requires nothing but honesty to do it, there needs but little to be said upon it.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, March 5, 1782.

THE AMERICAN CRISIS

XI

On the Present State of News

BRITAIN'S frantic efforts to influence the courts of Europe against the United States is to a great extent the subject of this instalment. In it Paine reveals Britain's propositions of peace through the mediation of Spain, followed by her propositions to the Emperor of Germany and the Empress of Russia to act as mediators and settle preliminaries of peace. Propositions were made even to the court of France, America's own ally!

Britain had the effrontery to make propositions to Dr. Franklin, then in Paris, in the hope that he might be influenced against our alliance with the French. "Beaten," Paine says, "but not humble; condemned but not penitent; they act like men trembling at fate and catching at a straw." In short, "we have nothing to do but to go on with vigor and determination."

SINCE the arrival of two, if not three packets in quick succession, at New York, from England, a variety of unconnected *news* has circulated through the country, and afforded as great a variety of speculation.

That something is the matter in the cabinet and councils of our enemies, on the other side of the water, is certain—that they have run their length of madness, and are under the necessity of changing their measures may easily be seen into; but to what this change of measures may amount, or how far it may correspond with our in-

terest, happiness and duty, is yet uncertain; and from what we have hitherto experienced, we have too much reason to suspect them in every thing.

I do not address this publication so much to the people of America as to the British ministry, whoever they may be, for if it is their intention to promote any kind of negotiation, it is proper they should know beforehand, that the United States have as much honor as bravery; and that they are no more to be seduced from their alliance than their allegiance; that their line of politics is formed and not dependent, like that of their enemy, on chance and accident.

On our part, in order to know, at any time, what the British government will do, we have only to find out what they ought *not* to do, and this last will be their conduct. Forever changing and forever wrong; too distant from America to improve in circumstances, and too unwise to foresee them; scheming without principle, and executing without probability, their whole line of management has hitherto been blunder and baseness. Every campaign has added to their loss, and every year to their disgrace; till unable to go on, and ashamed to go back, their politics have come to a halt, and all their fine prospects to a halter.

Could our affections forgive, or humanity forget the wounds of an injured country—we might, under

the influence of a momentary oblivion, stand still and laugh. But they are engraven where no amusement can conceal them, and of a kind for which there is no recompense. Can ye restore to us the beloved dead? Can ye say to the grave, give up the murdered? Can ye obliterate from our memories those who are no more? Think not then to tamper with our feelings by an insidious contrivance, nor suffocate our humanity by seducing us to dishonor.

In March 1780, I published part of the Crisis, No. VIII., in the newspapers, but did not conclude it in the following papers, and the remainder has lain by me till the present day.

There appeared about that time some disposition in the British cabinet to cease the further prosecution of the war, and as I had formed my opinion that whenever such a design should take place, it would be accompanied by a dishonorable proposition to America, respecting France, I had suppressed the remainder of that number, not to expose the baseness of any such proposition. But the arrival of the next news from England, declared her determination to go on with the war, and consequently as the political object I had then in view was not become a subject, it was unnecessary in me to bring it forward, which is the reason it was never published.

The matter which I allude to in the unpublished part, I shall now make a quotation of, and apply it as the more enlarged state of things, at this day, shall make convenient or necessary.

It was as follows:

"By the speeches which have appeared from the British Parliament, it is easy to perceive to what impolitic and imprudent excesses their passions and prejudices have, in every instance, carried them during the present war. Provoked at the upright and honorable treaty between America and France, they imagined that nothing more was necessary to be done to prevent its final ratification, than to promise, through the agency of their commissioners (Carlisle, Eden, and Johnstone) a repeal of their once offensive acts of Parliament. The vanity of the conceit, was as unpardonable as the experiment was impolitic. And so convinced am I of their wrong ideas of America, that I shall not wonder, if, in their last stage of political frenzy, they propose to her to break her alliance with France, and enter into one with them. Such a proposition, should it ever be made, and it has been already more than once hinted at in Parliament, would discover such a disposition to perfidiousness, and such disregard of honor and morals, as would add the finishing vice to national corruption.—I do

not mention this to put America on the watch, but to put England on her guard, that she do not, in the looseness of her heart, envelop in disgrace every fragment of reputation."—Thus far the quotation.

By the complection of some part of the news which has transpired through the New York papers, it seems probable that this insidious era in the British politics is beginning to make its appearance. I wish it may not; for that which is a disgrace to human nature, throws something of a shade over all the human character, and each individual feels his share of the wound that is given to the whole.

The policy of Britain has ever been to divide America in some way or other. In the beginning of the dispute, she practised every art to prevent or destroy the union of the states, well knowing that could she once get them to stand singly, she could conquer them unconditionally. Failing in this project in America, she renewed it in Europe; and, after the alliance had taken place, she made secret offers to France to induce her to give up America; and what is still more extraordinary, she at the same time made propositions to Dr. Franklin, then in Paris, the very court to which she was secretly applying, to draw off America from France. But this is not all.

On the 14th of September, 1778, the British court, through their secretary, Lord Weymouth, made application to the Marquis d'Almadovar, the Spanish ambassador at London, to "ask the *mediation*," for these were the words, of the court of Spain, for the purpose of negotiating a peace with France, leaving America (as I shall hereafter show) out of the question. Spain readily offered her mediation, and likewise the city of Madrid as the place of conference, but withal, proposed, that the United States of America should be invited to the treaty, and considered as independent during the time the business was negotiating. But this was not the view of England. She wanted to draw France from the war, that she might uninterruptedly pour out all her force and fury upon America; and being disappointed in this plan, as well through the open and generous conduct of Spain, as the determination of France, she refused the mediation which she had solicited.

I shall now give some extracts from the justifying memorial of the Spanish court, in which she has set the conduct and character of Britain, with respect to America, in a clear and striking point of light.

The memorial, speaking of the refusal of the British court to meet in conference with commissioners from the United States, who were to be con-

sidered as independent during the time of the conference, says,

"It is a thing very extraordinary and even ridiculous, that the court of London, who treats the colonies as independent, not only in acting, but of right, during the war, should have a repugnance to treat them as such only in acting during a truce, or suspension of hostilities. The convention of Saratoga; the reputing General Burgoyne as a lawful prisoner, in order to suspend his trial; the exchange and liberation of other prisoners made from the colonies; the having named commissioners to go and supplicate the Americans, at their own doors, request peace of them, and treat with them and the Congress: and, finally, by a thousand other acts of this sort, authorized by the court of London, which have been, and are true signs of the acknowledgment of their independence.

"In aggravation of all the foregoing, at the same time the British cabinet answered the King of Spain in the terms already mentioned, they were insinuating themselves at the court of France by means of secret emissaries, and making very great offers to her, to abandon the colonies and make peace with England. But there is yet more; for at this same time the English ministry were treating, by means of another certain emissary, with Dr. Franklin, minister plenipotentiary from the colonies, residing at Paris, to whom they made various proposals to disunite them from France, and accommodate matters with England.

"From what has been observed, it evidently follows, that the whole of the British politics was, to disunite the two

courts of Paris and Madrid, by means of the suggestions and offers which she separately made to them; and also to separate the colonies from their treaties and engagements entered into with France, and induce them to arm against the house of Bourbon, or *more probably to oppress them when they found, from breaking their engagements, that they stood alone and without protection.*

"This, therefore, is the net they laid for the American states; that is to say, to tempt them with flattering and very magnificent promises to come to an accommodation with them, exclusive of any intervention of Spain or France, that the British ministry might always remain the arbiters of the fate of the colonies.

"But the Catholic king (the King of Spain) faithful on the one part of the engagements which bind him to the Most Christian king (the King of France) his nephew; just and upright on the other, to his own subjects, whom he ought to protect and guard against so many insults; and finally, full of humanity and compassion for the Americans and other individuals who suffer in the present war; he is determined to pursue and prosecute it, and to make all the efforts in his power, until he can obtain a solid and permanent peace, with full and satisfactory securities that it shall be observed."

Thus far the memorial; a translation of which into English, may be seen in full, under the head of State Papers, in the Annual Register, for 1779, p. 367.

The extracts I have here given, serve to show the various endeavors and contrivances of the enemy, to draw France from her connection with America, and to prevail on her to make a separate peace with England, leaving America totally out of the question, and at the mercy of a merciless, unprincipled enemy. The opinion, likewise, which Spain has formed of the British cabinet's character for meanness and perfidiousness, is so exactly the opinion of America respecting it, that the memorial, in this instance, contains our own statements and language; for people, however remote, who think alike, will unavoidably speak alike.

Thus we see the insidious use which Britain endeavored to make of the propositions of peace under the mediation of Spain. I shall now proceed to the second proposition under the mediation of the Emperor of Germany and the Empress of Russia; the general outline of which was, that a congress of the several powers at war should meet at Vienna, in 1781, to settle preliminaries of peace.

I could wish myself at liberty to make use of all the information which I am possessed of on this subject, but as there is a delicacy in the matter, I do not conceive it prudent, at least at present, to make references and quotations in the same manner as I have

done with respect to the mediation of Spain, who published the whole proceedings herself; and therefore, what comes from me, on this part of the business, must rest on my own credit with the public, assuring them, that when the whole proceedings, relative to the proposed Congress of Vienna shall appear, they will find my account not only true, but studiously moderate.

We know at the time this mediation was on the carpet, the expectation of the British king and ministry ran high with respect to the conquest of America. The English packet which was taken with the mail on board, and carried into l'Orient, in France, contained letters from Lord G. Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton, which expressed in the fullest terms the ministerial idea of a total conquest. Copies of those letters were sent to congress and published in the newspapers of last year. Colonel [John] Laurens brought over the originals, some of which, signed in the handwriting of the then secretary, Germaine, are now in my possession.

Filled with these high ideas, nothing could be more insolent towards America than the language of the British court on the proposed mediation. A peace with France and Spain she anxiously solicited; but America, as before, was to be left to her mercy, neither

would she hear any proposition for admitting an agent from the United States into the congress of Vienna.

On the other hand, France, with an open, noble and manly determination, and a fidelity of a good ally, would hear no proposition for a separate peace, nor even meet in congress at Vienna, without an agent from America: and likewise that the independent character of the United States, represented by the agent, should be fully and unequivocally defined and settled before any conference should be entered on. The reasoning of the court of France on the several propositions of the two imperial courts, which relate to us, is rather in the style of an American than an ally, and she advocated the cause of America as if she had been America herself.—Thus the second mediation, like the first, proved ineffectual.

But since that time, a reverse of fortune has overtaken the British arms, and all their high expectations are dashed to the ground. The noble exertions to the southward under General [Nathaniel] Greene; the successful operations of the allied arms in the Chesapeake; the loss of most of their islands in the West Indies, and Minorca in the Mediterranean; the persevering spirit of Spain against Gibraltar; the expected capture of Jamaica; the failure of making a

separate peace with Holland, and the expense of an hundred millions sterling, by which all these fine losses were obtained, have read them a loud lesson of disgraceful misfortune, and necessity has called on them to change their ground.

In this situation of confusion and despair, their present councils have no fixed character. It is now the hurricane months of British politics. Every day seems to have a storm of its own, and they are scudding under the bare poles of hope. Beaten, but not humble; condemned, but not penitent; they act like men trembling at fate and catching at a straw. From this convulsion, in the entrails of their politics, it is more than probable, that the mountain groaning in labor, will bring forth a mouse, as to its size, and a monster in its make. They will try on America the same insidious arts they tried on France and Spain.

We sometimes experience sensations to which language is not equal. The conception is too bulky to be born alive, and in the torture of thinking, we stand dumb. Our feelings, imprisoned by their magnitude, find no way out—and, in the struggle of expression, every finger tries to be a tongue. The machinery of the body seems too little for the mind, and we look about for helps to show our thoughts by. Such must be the sensation of America, whenever Britain, teem-

ing with corruption, shall propose to her to sacrifice her faith.

But, exclusive of the wickedness, there is a personal offence contained in every such attempt. It is calling us villains: for no man asks the other to act the villain unless he believes him inclined to be one. No man attempts to seduce the truly honest woman. It is the supposed looseness of her mind that starts the thoughts of seduction, and he who offers it calls her a prostitute. Our pride is always hurt by the same propositions which offend our principles; for when we are shocked at the crime, we are wounded by the suspicion of our compliance.

Could I convey a thought that might serve to regulate the public mind, I would not make the interest of the alliance the basis of defending it. All the world are moved by interest, and it affords them nothing to boast of. But I would go a step higher, and defend it on the ground of honor and principle. That our public affairs have flourished under the alliance—that it was wisely made, and has been nobly executed—that by its assistance we are enabled to preserve our country from conquest, and expel those who sought our destruction—that it is our true interest to maintain it unimpaired, and that while we do so no enemy can conquer us, are matters which ex-

perience has taught us, and the common good of ourselves, abstracted from principles of faith and honor, would lead us to maintain the connection.

But over and above the mere letter of the alliance, we have been nobly and generously treated, and have had the same respect and attention paid to us, as if we had been an old established country. To oblige and be obliged is fair work among mankind, and we want an opportunity of showing to the world that we are a people sensible of kindness and worthy of confidence. Character is to us, in our present circumstances, of more importance than interest. We are a young nation, just stepping upon the stage of public life, and the eye of the world is upon us to see how we act. We have an enemy who is watching to destroy our reputation, and who will go any length to gain some evidence against us, that may serve to render our conduct suspected, and our character odious; because, could she accomplish this, wicked as it is, the world would withdraw from us, as from a people not to be trusted, and our task would then become difficult.

There is nothing which sets the character of a nation in a higher or lower light with others, than the faithfully fulfilling, or perfidiously breaking, of treaties. They are things not to be tampered with:

and should Britain, which seems very probable, propose to seduce America into such an act of baseness, it would merit from her some mark of unusual detestation. It is one of those extraordinary instances in which we ought not to be contented with the bare negative of Congress, because it is an affront on the multitude as well as on the government. It goes on the supposition that the public are not honest men, and that they may be managed by contrivance, though they cannot be conquered by arms. But, let the world and Britain know, that we are neither to be bought nor sold; that our mind is great and fixed; our prospect clear; and that we will support our character as firmly as our independence.

But I will go still further; General Conway, who made the motion, in the British Parliament, for discontinuing *offensive* war in America, is a gentleman of an amiable character. We have no personal quarrel with him. But he feels not as we feel; he is not in our situation, and that alone, without any other explanation, is enough.

The British Parliament suppose they have many friends in America, and that, when all chance of conquest is over, they will be able to draw her from her alliance with France. Now, if I have any concep-

tion of the human heart, they will fail in this more than in any thing that they have yet tried.

This part of the business is not a question of policy only, but of honor and honesty; and the proposition will have in it something so visibly low and base, that their partisans, if they have any, will be ashamed of it. Men are often hurt by a mean action who are not startled at a wicked one, and this will be such a confession of inability, such a declaration of servile thinking, that the scandal of it will ruin all their hopes.

In short, we have nothing to do but to go on with vigor and determination. The enemy is yet in our country. They hold New York, Charleston, and Savannah, and the very being in those places is an offence, and a part of offensive war, and until they can be driven from them, or captured in them, it would be folly in us to listen to an idle tale. I take it for granted that the British ministry are sinking under the impossibility of carrying on the war. Let them then come to a fair and open peace with France, Spain, Holland and America, in the manner they ought to do; but until then, we can have nothing to say to them.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, May 22, 1782.

A SUPERNUMERARY CRISIS

To Sir Guy Carleton [1]

PAINE'S humanitarian instincts were responsible for this "Supernumerary Crisis," interrupting the numerical order of "The American Crisis" series, and written hastily, that it might save the life of an enemy condemned to execution.

The tragic and pathetic story is told in this effort to save, if possible, the life of young Captain Asgill, of the British Army. Paine was not satisfied to rest with the "Supernumerary Crisis" off the press, but wrote to Washington, pleading the case of the enemy officer.

Washington, in a letter, September 30, 1782, to a member of Congress, intimates his hope that Congress will release Asgill. Congress then took up the matter and decided Asgill should not hang. He was freed at once, and Washington wrote the British captain a generous letter of congratulation.

IT is the nature of compassion to associate with misfortune; and I address this to you in behalf even of an enemy, a captain in the British service, now on his way to the headquarters of the American army, and unfortunately doomed to death for a crime not his own. A sentence so extraordinary, an execution so repugnant to every human sensation, ought never to be told without the circumstances which produced it: and as the destined victim is yet in existence, and in your hands rests his life or death, I shall briefly state the case, and the melancholy consequence.

[1] Sir Guy Carleton had succeeded General Sir Henry Clinton at New York.—*Editor.*

Captain Huddy, of the Jersey militia, was attacked in a small fort on Tom's River, by a party of refugees in the British pay and service, was made prisoner, together with his company, carried to New York and lodged in the provost of that city: about three weeks after which, he was taken out of the provost down to the water-side, put into a boat, and brought again upon the Jersey shore, and there, contrary to the practice of all nations but savages, was hung up on a tree, and left hanging till found by our people who took him down and buried him.

The inhabitants of that part of the country where the murder was committed, sent a deputation to General Washington with a full and certified statement of the fact. Struck, as every human breast must be, with such brutish outrage, and determined both to punish and prevent it for the future, the General represented the case to General Clinton, who then commanded, and demanded that the refugee officer who ordered and attended the execution, and whose name is Lippincut, should be delivered up as a murderer; and in case of refusal, that the person of some British officer should suffer in his stead. The demand, though not refused, has not been complied with; and the melancholy lot (not by selection, but by casting lots) has fallen upon Captain Asgill, of

the Guards, who, as I have already mentioned, is on his way from Lancaster to camp, a martyr to the general wickedness of the cause he engaged in, and the ingratitude of those whom he served.

The first reflection which arises on this black business is, what sort of men must Englishmen be, and what sort of order and discipline do they preserve in their army, when in the immediate place of their headquarters, and under the eye and nose of their commander-in-chief, a prisoner can be taken at pleasure from his confinement, and his death made a matter of sport.

The history of the most savage Indians does not produce instances exactly of this kind. They, at least, have a formality in their punishments. With them it is the horridness of revenge, but with your army it is a still greater crime, the horridness of diversion.

The British generals who have succeeded each other, from the time of General Gage to yourself, have all affected to speak in language that they have no right to. In their proclamations, their addresses, their letters to General Washington, and their supplications to Congress (for they deserve no other name) they talk of British honor, British generosity, and British clemency, as if those things were matters of

fact; whereas, we whose eyes are open, who speak the same language with yourselves, many of whom were born on the same spot with you, and who can no more be mistaken in your words than in your actions, can declare to all the world, that so far as our knowledge goes, there is not a more detestable character, nor a meaner or more barbarous enemy, than the present British one. With us, you have forfeited all pretensions to reputation, and it is only by holding you like a wild beast, afraid of your keepers, that you can be made manageable. But to return to the point in question.

Though I can think no man innocent who has lent his hand to destroy the country which he did not plant, and to ruin those that he could not enslave, yet, abstracted from all ideas of right and wrong on the original question, Captain Asgill, in the present case, is not the guilty man. The villain and the victim are here separated characters. You hold the one and we the other. You disown, or affect to disown and reprobate the conduct of Lippincut, yet you give him a sanctuary; and by so doing you as effectually become the executioner of Asgill, as if you had put the rope on his neck, and dismissed him from the world. Whatever your feelings on this interesting occasion may be are best known to yourself. Within the grave

of your own mind lies buried the fate of Asgill. He becomes the corpse of your will, or the survivor of your justice. Deliver up the one, and you save the other; withhold the one, and the other dies by your choice.

On our part the case is exceeding plain; *an officer has been taken from his confinement and murdered, and the murderer is within your lines.* Your army has been guilty of a thousand instances of equal cruelty, but they have been rendered equivocal, and sheltered from personal detection. Here the crime is fixed; and is one of those extraordinary cases which can neither be denied nor palliated, and to which the custom of war does not apply; for it never could be supposed that such a brutal outrage would ever be committed. It is an original in the history of civilized barbarians, and is truly British.

On your part you are accountable to us for the personal safety of the prisoners within your walls. Here can be no mistake; they can neither be spies nor suspected as such; your security is not endangered, nor your operations subjected to miscarriage, by men immured within a dungeon. They differ in every circumstance from men in the field, and leave no pretence for severity of punishment. But if to the dismal condition of captivity with you

must be added the constant apprehensions of death; if to be imprisoned is so nearly to be entombed; and if, after all, the murderers are to be protected, and thereby the crime encouraged, wherein do you differ from [American] Indians either in conduct or character?

We can have no idea of your honor, or your justice, in any future transaction, of what nature it may be, while you shelter within your lines an outrageous murderer, and sacrifice in his stead an officer of your own. If you have no regard to us, at least spare the blood which it is your duty to save. Whether the punishment will be greater on him, who, in this case, innocently dies, or on him whom sad necessity forces to retaliate, is, in the nicety of sensation, an undecided question? It rests with you to prevent the sufferings of both. You have nothing to do but to give up the murderer, and the matter ends.

But to protect him, be he who he may, is to patronize his crime, and to trifle it off by frivolous and unmeaning inquiries, is to promote it. There is no declaration you can make, nor promise you can give that will obtain credit. It is the man and not the apology that is demanded.

You see yourself pressed on all sides to spare the life of your own officer, for die he will if you with-

hold justice. The murder of Captain Huddy is an offence not to be borne with, and there is no security which we can have, that such actions or similar ones shall not be repeated, but by making the punishment fall upon yourselves. To destroy the last security of captivity, and to take the unarmed, the unresisting prisoner to private and sportive execution, is carrying barbarity too high for silence. The evil *must* be put an end to; and the choice of persons rests with you. But if your attachment to the guilty is stronger than to the innocent, you invent a crime that must destroy your character, and if the cause of your king needs to be so supported, for ever cease, sir, to torture our remembrance with the wretched phrases of British honor, British generosity and British clemency.

From this melancholy circumstance, learn, sir, a lesson of morality. The refugees are men whom your predecessors have instructed in wickedness, the better to fit them to their master's purpose. To make them useful, they have made them vile, and the consequence of their tutored villany is now descending on the heads of their encouragers. They have been trained like hounds to the scent of blood, and cherished in every species of dissolute barbarity. Their ideas of right and wrong are worn away in the constant habitude of

repeated infamy, till, like men practised in execution, they feel not the value of another's life.

The task before you, though painful, is not difficult; give up the murderer, and save your officer, as the first outset of a necessary reformation.

COMMON SENSE.[1]

PHILADELPHIA, May 31, 1782.

[1] The lot fell on Asgill May 27, 1782, at Lancaster, Pennsylvania; it will be seen by the date of this letter to the commander at New York that it was written immediately after the arrival of the news in Philadelphia. Paine was ignorant of the fact that young Asgill, an officer under Cornwallis, was, by Article 14 of his chief's terms of capitulation, exempted from liability to the danger which now threatened him. On September 7th Paine wrote Washington a plea for Asgill's life, saying, "it will look much better hereafter." It is not gratifying to Americans to learn that it was only after a protest from the court of France, whose honor was also involved, that Captain Asgill was released.

The guilt of Captain Lippencott was strenuously denied, and the facts are still unknown.—*Editor.*

THE AMERICAN CRISIS

XII

To the Earl of Shelburne [1]

THE Earl of Shelburne's speech in the British Parliament is the subject of this number. Paine quotes the fulmination of the earl at some length—much, no doubt, to the amusement of the American patriots, who read eagerly each issue of "The American Crisis" as it came from the press. The titled Briton had declared in his speech, that "the independence of America would end in the ruin of England."

The earl pleads for something less than independence. "A thousand pleadings," Paine replies, "can have no effect." Quoting Shelburne's speech, "the sun of Great Britain will set whenever she acknowledges the independence of America," Paine says, "Was America then, the giant of the empire, and England only her dwarf in waiting?"

MY LORD,—A speech, which has been printed in several of the British and New York newspapers, as coming from your lordship, in answer to one from the Duke of Richmond, of the 10th of July last, contains expressions and opinions so new and singular, and so enveloped in mysterious reasoning, that I address this publication to you, for the purpose of giving them a free and candid examination. The speech I allude to is in these words:

[1] Afterwards Lord Lansdowne, whose friendship Paine subsequently enjoyed in England. Writing to Jefferson, March 12, 1789, Paine says: "I believe I am not so much in the good graces

"His lordship said, it had been mentioned in another place, that he had been guilty of inconsistency. To clear himself of this, he asserted that he still held the same principles in respect to American independence which he at first imbibed. He had been, and yet was of opinion, whenever the Parliament of Great Britain acknowledges that point, the sun of England's glory is set forever. Such were the sentiments he possessed on a former day, and such the sentiments he continued to hold at this hour. It was the opinion of Lord Chatham, as well as many other able statesmen. Other noble lords, however, think differently, and as the majority of the cabinet support them, he acquiesced in the measure, dissenting from the idea; and the point is settled for bringing the matter into the full discussion of Parliament, where it will be candidly, fairly, and impartially debated. The independence of America would end in the ruin of England; and that a peace patched up with France, would give that proud enemy the means of yet trampling on this country. The sun of England's glory he wished not to see set forever; he looked for a spark at least to be left, which might in time light us up to a new day. But if independence was to be granted, if Parliament deemed that measure prudent, he foresaw, in his own mind, that England was undone. He wished to God that he had been deputed to Congress, that he might plead the

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of the Marquis of Lansdowne as I used to be—I do not answer his purpose. He was always talking of a sort of reconnection of England and America, and my coldness and reserve on this subject checked communication."—*Editor.*

cause of that country as well as of this, and that he might exercise whatever powers he possessed as an orator, to save both from ruin, in a conviction to Congress, that, if their independence was signed, their liberties were gone forever.

"Peace, his lordship added, was a desirable object, but it must be an honorable peace, and not an humiliating one, dictated by France, or insisted on by America. It was very true, that this kingdom was not in a flourishing state, it was impoverished by war. But if we were not rich, it was evident that France was poor. If we were straitened in our finances, the enemy were exhausted in their resources. This was a great empire; it abounded with brave men, who were able and willing to fight in a common cause; the language of humiliation should not, therefore, be the language of Great Britain. His lordship said, that he was not afraid nor ashamed of those expressions going to America. There were numbers, great numbers there, who were of the same way of thinking, in respect to that country being dependant on this, and who, with his lordship, perceived ruin and independence linked together."

Thus far the speech; on which I remark—That his lordship is a total stranger to the mind and sentiments of America; that he has wrapped himself up in fond delusion, that something less than independence, may, under his administration, be accepted; and he wishes himself sent to Congress, to prove the most extraordinary of all doctrines, which is, that *independence*, the sublimest of all human conditions, is loss of liberty.

In answer to which we may say, that in order to know what the contrary word *dependance* means, we have only to look back to those years of severe humiliation, when the mildest of all petitions could obtain no other notice than the haughtiest of all insults; and when the base terms of unconditional submission were demanded, or undistinguishable destruction threatened. It is nothing to us that the ministry have been changed, for they may be changed again. The guilt of a government is the crime of a whole country; and the nation that can, though but for a moment, think and act as England has done, can never afterwards be believed or trusted. There are cases in which it is as impossible to restore character to life, as it is to recover the dead. It is a phœnix that can expire but once, and from whose ashes there is no resurrection. Some offences are of such a slight composition, that they reach no further than the temper, and are created or cured by a thought. But the sin of England has struck the heart of America, and nature has not left in our power to say we can forgive.

Your lordship wishes for an opportunity to plead before Congress *the cause of England and America, and to save,* as you say, *both from ruin.*

That the country, which, for more than seven years has sought our destruction, should now cringe to solicit our protection, is adding the wretchedness of disgrace to the misery of disappointment; and if England has the least spark of supposed honor left, that spark must be darkened by asking, and extinguished by receiving, the smallest favor from America; for the criminal who owes his life to the grace and mercy of the injured, is more executed by living, than he who dies.

But a thousand pleadings, even from your lordship, can have no effect. Honor, interest, and every sensation of the heart, would plead against you. We are a people who think not as you think; and what is equally true, you cannot feel as we feel. The situations of the two countries are exceedingly different. Ours has been the seat of war; yours has seen nothing of it. The most wanton destruction has been committed in our sight; the most insolent barbarity has been acted on our feelings. We can look round and see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, once the fair fruit of hard industry, and now the striking monuments of British brutality. We walk over the dead whom we loved, in every part of America, and remember by whom they fell. There is scarcely a village but brings to life some melancholy thought,

and reminds us of what we have suffered, and of those we have lost by the inhumanity of Britain. A thousand images arise to us, which, from situation, you cannot see, and are accompanied by as many ideas which you cannot know; and therefore your supposed system of reasoning would apply to nothing, and all your expectations die of themselves.

The question whether England shall accede to the independence of America, and which your lordship says is to undergo a parliamentary discussion, is so very simple, and composed of so few cases, that it scarcely needs a debate.

It is the only way out of an expensive and ruinous war, which has no object, and without which acknowledgment there can be no peace.

But your lordship says, *the sun of Great Britain will set whenever she acknowledges the independence of America.*—Whereas the metaphor would have been strictly just, to have left the sun wholly out of the figure, and have ascribed her not acknowledging it to the influence of the moon.

But the expression, if true, is the greatest confession of disgrace that could be made, and furnishes America with the highest notions of sovereign independent importance. Mr. Wedderburne, about the year 1776, made use of an idea of much the same

kind,—*Relinquish America!* says he—*What is it but to desire a giant to shrink spontaneously into a dwarf.*

Alas! are those people who call themselves Englishmen, of so little internal consequence, that when America is gone, or shuts her eyes upon them, their sun is set, they can shine no more, but grope about in obscurity, and contract into insignificant animals? Was America, then, the giant of the empire, and England only her dwarf in waiting! Is the case so strangely altered, that those who once thought we could not live without them, are now brought to declare that they cannot exist without us? Will they tell to the world, and that from their first minister of state, that America is their all in all; that it is by her importance only that they can live, and breathe, and have a being? Will they, who long since threatened to bring us to their feet, bow themselves to ours, and own that without us they are not a nation? Are they become so unqualified to debate on independence, that they have lost all idea of it themselves, and are calling to the rocks and mountains of America to cover their insignificance? Or, if America is lost, is it manly to sob over it like a child for its rattle, and invite the laughter of the world by declarations of disgrace? Surely, a more consistent line of conduct would be to bear it without complaint; and to show

that England, without America, can preserve her independence, and a suitable rank with other European powers. You were not contented while you had her, and to weep for her now is childish.

But Lord Shelburne thinks something may yet be done. What that something is, or how it is to be accomplished, is a matter in obscurity. By arms there is no hope. The experience of nearly eight years, with the expense of an hundred million pounds sterling, and the loss of two armies, must positively decide that point. Besides, the British have lost their interest in America with the disaffected. Every part of it has been tried. There is no new scene left for delusion: and the thousands who have been ruined by adhering to them, and have now to quit the settlements which they had acquired, and be conveyed like transports to cultivate the deserts of Augustine and Nova Scotia, has put an end to all further expectations of aid.

If you cast your eyes on the people of England, what have they to console themselves with for the millions expended? Or, what encouragement is there left to continue throwing good money after bad? America can carry on the war for ten years longer, and all the charges of government included, for less than you can defray the charges of war and government

for one year. And I, who know both countries, know well, that the people of America can afford to pay their share of the expense much better than the people of England can. Besides, it is their own estates and property, their own rights, liberties and government, that they are defending; and were they not to do it, they would deserve to lose all, and none would pity them. The fault would be their own, and their punishment just.

The British army in America care not how long the war lasts. They enjoy an easy and indolent life. They fatten on the folly of one country and the spoils of another; and, between their plunder and their prey, may go home rich. But the case is very different with the laboring farmer, the working tradesman, and the necessitous poor in England, the sweat of whose brow goes day after day to feed, in prodigality and sloth, the army that is robbing both them and us. Removed from the eye of that country that supports them, and distant from the government that employs them, they cut and carve for themselves, and there is none to call them to account.

But England will be ruined, says Lord Shelburne, if America is independent.

Then I say, is England already ruined, for America is already independent: and if Lord Shelburne will

not allow this, he immediately denies the fact which he infers. Besides, to make England the mere creature of America, is paying too great a compliment to us, and too little to himself.

But the declaration is a rhapsody of inconsistency. For to say, as Lord Shelburne has numberless times said, that the war against America is ruinous, and yet to continue the prosecution of that ruinous war for the purpose of avoiding ruin, is a language which cannot be understood. Neither is it possible to see how the independence of America is to accomplish the ruin of England after the war is over, and yet not affect it before. America cannot be more independent of her, nor a greater enemy to her, hereafter than she now is; nor can England derive less advantages from her than at present: why then is ruin to follow in the best state of the case, and not in the worst? And if not in the worst, why is it to follow at all?

That a nation is to be ruined by peace and commerce, and fourteen or fifteen millions a-year less expenses than before, is a new doctrine in politics. We have heard much clamor of national savings and economy; but surely the true economy would be, to save the whole charge of a silly, foolish, and headstrong war; because, compared with this, all other retrenchments are baubles and trifles.

But is it possible that Lord Shelburne can be serious in supposing that the least advantage can be obtained by arms, or that any advantage can be equal to the expense or the danger of attempting it? Will not the capture of one army after another satisfy him, must all become prisoners? Must England ever be the sport of hope, and the victim of delusion? Sometimes our currency was to fail; another time our army was to disband; then whole provinces were to revolt. Such a general said this and that; another wrote so and so; Lord Chatham was of this opinion; and lord somebody else of another. To-day 20,000 Russians and 20 Russian ships of the line were to come; to-morrow the empress was abused without mercy or decency. Then the Emperor of Germany was to be bribed with a million of money, and the King of Prussia was to do wonderful things. At one time it was, Lo here! and then it was, Lo there! Sometimes this power, and sometimes that power, was to engage in the war, just as if the whole world was mad and foolish like Britain. And thus, from year to year, has every straw been catched at, and every Will-with-a-wisp led them a new dance.

This year a still newer folly is to take place. Lord Shelburne wishes to be sent to Congress, and he thinks that something may be done.

Are not the repeated declarations of Congress, and which all America supports, that they will not even hear any proposals whatever, until the unconditional and unequivocal independence of America is recognised; are not, I say, these declarations answer enough?

But for England to receive any thing from America now, after so many insults, injuries and outrages, acted towards us, would show such a spirit of meanness in her, that we could not but despise her for accepting it. And so far from Lord Shelburne's coming here to solicit it, it would be the greatest disgrace we could do them to offer it. England would appear a wretch indeed, at this time of day, to ask or owe any thing to the bounty of America. Has not the name of Englishman blots enough upon it, without inventing more? Even Lucifer would scorn to reign in heaven by permission, and yet an Englishman can creep for only an entrance into America. Or, has a land of liberty so many charms, that to be a doorkeeper in it is better than to be an English minister of state?

But what can this expected something be? Or, if obtained, what can it amount to, but new disgraces, contentions and quarrels? The people of America have for years accustomed themselves to think and

speak so freely and contemptuously of English authority, and the inveteracy is so deeply rooted, that a person invested with any authority from that country, and attempting to exercise it here, would have the life of a toad under a harrow. They would look on him as an interloper, to whom their compassion permitted a residence. He would be no more than the Mungo of a farce; and if he disliked that, he must set off. It would be a station of degradation, debased by our pity, and despised by our pride, and would place England in a more contemptible situation than any she has yet been in during the war. We have too high an opinion of ourselves, even to think of yielding again the least obedience to outlandish authority; and for a thousand reasons, England would be the last country in the world to yield it to. She has been treacherous, and we know it. Her character is gone, and we have seen the funeral.

Surely she loves to fish in troubled waters, and drink the cup of contention, or she would not now think of mingling her affairs with those of America. It would be like a foolish dotard taking to his arms the bride that despises him, or who has placed on his head the ensigns of her disgust. It is kissing the hand that boxes his ears, and proposing to renew the exchange. The thought is as servile as the war is wicked, and

shows the last scene of the drama to be as inconsistent as the first.

As America is gone, the only act of manhood is to *let her go*. Your lordship had no hand in the separation, and you will gain no honor by temporising politics. Besides, there is something so exceedingly whimsical, unsteady, and even insincere in the present conduct of England, that she exhibits herself in the most dishonorable colors.

On the second of August last, General Carleton and Admiral Digby wrote to General Washington in these words:

"The resolution of the House of Commons, of the 27th of February last, has been placed in Your Excellency's hands, and intimations given at the same time that further pacific measures were likely to follow. Since which, until the present time, we have had no direct communications with England; but a mail is now arrived, which brings us very important information. We are acquainted, sir, *by authority*, that negotiations for a general peace have already commenced at Paris, and that Mr. Grenville is invested with full powers to treat with all the parties at war, and is now at Paris in execution of his commission. And we are further, sir, made acquainted, *that His Majesty, in order to remove any obstacles to that peace which he so ardently wishes to restore, has commanded his ministers to direct Mr. Grenville, that the independence of the*

Thirteen United Provinces, should be proposed by him in the first instance, instead of making it a condition of a general treaty."

Now, taking your present measures into view, and comparing them with the declaration in this letter, pray what is the word of your king, or his ministers, or the Parliament, good for? Must we not look upon you as a confederated body of faithless, treacherous men, whose assurances are fraud, and their language deceit? What opinion can we possibly form of you, but that you are a lost, abandoned, profligate nation, who sport even with your own character, and are to be held by nothing but the bayonet or the halter?

To say, after this, *that the sun of Great Britain will be set whenever she acknowledges the independence of America,* when the not doing it is the unqualified lie of government, can be no other than the language of ridicule, the jargon of inconsistency. There were thousands in America who predicted the delusion, and looked upon it as a trick of treachery, to take us from our guard, and draw off our attention from the only system of finance, by which we can be called, or deserve to be called, a sovereign, independent people. The fraud, on your part, might be worth attempting, but the sacrifice to obtain it is too high.

There are others who credited the assurance, because they thought it impossible that men who had their characters to establish, would begin with a lie. The prosecution of the war by the former ministry was savage and horrid; since which it has been mean, trickish, and delusive. The one went greedily into the passion of revenge, the other into the subtleties of low contrivance; till, between the crimes of both, there is scarcely left a man in America, be he Whig or Tory, who does not despise or detest the conduct of Britain.

The management of Lord Shelburne, whatever may be his views, is a caution to us, and must be to the world, never to regard British assurances. A perfidy so notorious cannot be hid. It stands even in the public papers of New York, with the names of Carleton and Digby affixed to it. It is a proclamation that the king of England is not to be believed; that the spirit of lying is the governing principle of the ministry. It is holding up the character of the House of Commons to public infamy, and warning all men not to credit them. Such are the consequences which Lord Shelburne's management has brought upon his country.

After the authorized declarations contained in Carleton and Digby's letter, you ought, from every

motive of honor, policy and prudence, to have fulfilled them, whatever might have been the event. It was the least atonement that you could possibly make to America, and the greatest kindness you could do to yourselves; for you will save millions by a general peace, and you will lose as many by continuing the war.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 29, 1782.

P. S. The manuscript copy of this letter is sent your lordship, by the way of our head-quarters, to New York, inclosing a late pamphlet of mine, addressed to the Abbe Raynal, which will serve to give your lordship some idea of the principles and sentiments of America.

C. S.

XIII

Thoughts on the Peace, and the Probable Advantages Thereof

PAINE exultingly cries in the beginning of this last instalment that "The times that tried men's souls are over," the first six words of the sentence being a quotation from the opening words of the first number of "The American Crisis."

The surrender of Cornwallis meant the signing of a treaty of peace and the acknowledgment by Britain of the independence of the United States, which followed five months later in Paris. "The struggle is over," Paine says, "which must one day have happened, and, perhaps, never could have happened at a better time. Our great title is AMERICANS, *our inferior one varies with the place."*

Paine declares in this pamphlet that "It was the cause of America that made me an author." He says Britain's policy convinced him of the necessity of a Declaration of Independence, which he advocated in "Common Sense."

THE times that tried men's souls," * are over—and the greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew, gloriously and happily accomplished.

But to pass from the extremes of danger to safety—from the tumult of war to the tranquillity of peace, though sweet in contemplation, requires a gradual composure of the senses to receive it. Even calmness has the power of stunning, when it opens too instantly upon us. The long and raging hurricane that should cease

* "These are the times that try men's souls," The Crisis No. I. published December, 1776.—*Author.*

in a moment, would leave us in a state rather of wonder than enjoyment; and some moments of recollection must pass, before we could be capable of tasting the felicity of repose. There are but few instances, in which the mind is fitted for sudden transitions: it takes in its pleasures by reflection and comparison and those must have time to act, before the relish for new scenes is complete.

In the present case—the mighty magnitude of the object—the various uncertainties of fate it has undergone—the numerous and complicated dangers we have suffered or escaped—the eminence we now stand on, and the vast prospect before us, must all conspire to impress us with contemplation.

To see it in our power to make a world happy—to teach mankind the art of being so—to exhibit, on the theatre of the universe a character hitherto unknown —and to have, as it were, a new creation intrusted to our hands, are honors that command reflection, and can neither be too highly estimated, nor too gratefully received.

In this pause then of recollection—while the storm is ceasing, and the long agitated mind vibrating to a rest, let us look back on the scenes we have passed, and learn from experience what is yet to be done.

Never, I say, had a country so many openings to happiness as this. Her setting out in life, like the rising of a fair morning, was unclouded and promising. Her cause was good. Her principles just and liberal. Her temper serene and firm. Her conduct regulated by the nicest steps, and everything about her wore the mark of honor. It is not every country (perhaps there is not another in the world) that can boast so fair an origin. Even the first settlement of America corresponds with the character of the revolution. Rome, once the proud mistress of the universe, was originally a band of ruffians. Plunder and rapine made her rich, and her oppression of millions made her great. But America need never be ashamed to tell her birth, nor relate the stages by which she rose to empire.

The remembrance, then, of what is past, if it operates rightly, must inspire her with the most laudable of all ambition, that of adding to the fair fame she began with. The world has seen her great in adversity; struggling, without a thought of yielding, beneath accumulated difficulties, bravely, nay proudly, encountering distress, and rising in resolution as the storm increased. All this is justly due to her, for her fortitude has merited the character. Let, then, the world see that she can bear prosperity: and

that her honest virtue in time of peace, is equal to the bravest virtue in time of war.

She is now descending to the scenes of quiet and domestic life. Not beneath the cypress shade of disappointment, but to enjoy in her own land, and under her own vine, the sweet of her labors, and the reward of her toil.—In this situation, may she never forget that a fair national reputation is of as much importance as independence. That it possesses a charm that wins upon the world, and makes even enemies civil. That it gives a dignity which is often superior to power, and commands reverence where pomp and splendor fail.

It would be a circumstance ever to be lamented and never to be forgotten, were a single blot, from any cause whatever, suffered to fall on a revolution, which to the end of time must be an honor to the age that accomplished it: and which has contributed more to enlighten the world, and diffuse a spirit of freedom and liberality among mankind, than any human event (if this may be called one) that ever preceded it.

It is not among the least of the calamities of a long continued war, that it unhinges the mind from those nice sensations which at other times appear so amiable. The continual spectacle of woe blunts the finer feelings, and the necessity of bearing with the

sight, renders it familiar. In like manner, are many of the moral obligations of society weakened, till the custom of acting by necessity becomes an apology, where it is truly a crime. Yet let but a nation conceive rightly of its character, and it will be chastely just in protecting it. None ever began with a fairer than America and none can be under a greater obligation to preserve it.

The debt which America has contracted, compared with the cause she has gained, and the advantages to flow from it, ought scarcely to be mentioned. She has it in her choice to do, and to live as happily as she pleases. The world is in her hands. She has no foreign power to monopolize her commerce, perplex her legislation, or control her prosperity. The struggle is over, which must one day have happened, and, perhaps, never could have happened at a better time.* And instead of a domineering master, she has

* That the revolution began at the exact period of time best fitted to the purpose, is sufficiently proved by the event.—But the great hinge on which the whole machine turned, is the *Union of the States:* and this union was naturally produced by the inability of any one state to support itself against any foreign enemy without the assistance of the rest.

Had the states severally been less able than they were when the war began, their united strength would not have been equal to the undertaking, and they must in all human probability have failed.—And, on the other hand, had they severally been more able, they might not have seen, or, what is more, might not have

gained an *ally* whose exemplary greatness, and universal liberality, have extorted a confession even from her enemies.

With the blessings of peace, independence, and an universal commerce, the states, individually and collectively, will have leisure and opportunity to regulate and establish their domestic concerns, and to put it beyond the power of calumny to throw the least reflection on their honor. Character is much easier kept than recovered, and that man, if any such there be, who, from sinister views, or littleness of soul, lends unseen his hand to injure it, contrives a wound it will never be in his power to heal.

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felt, the necessity of uniting: and, either by attempting to stand alone or in small confederacies, would have been separately conquered.

Now, as we cannot see a time (and many years must pass away before it can arrive) when the strength of any one state, or several united, can be equal to the whole of the present United States, and as we have seen the extreme difficulty of collectively prosecuting the war to a successful issue, and preserving our national importance in the world, therefore, from the experience we have had, and the knowledge we have gained, we must, unless we make a waste of wisdom, be strongly impressed with the advantage, as well as the necessity of strengthening that happy union which had been our salvation, and without which we should have been a ruined people.

While I was writing this note, I cast my eye on the pamphlet, Common Sense, from which I shall make an extract, as it exactly applies to the case. It is as follows:

As we have established an inheritance for posterity, let that inheritance descend, with every mark of an honorable conveyance. The little it will cost, compared with the worth of the states, the greatness of the object, and the value of the national character, will be a profitable exchange.

But that which must more forcibly strike a thoughtful, penetrating mind, and which includes and renders easy all inferior concerns, is the UNION OF THE STATES. On this our great national character depends. It is this which must give us importance abroad and security at home. It is through this only that we are, or can be, nationally known in the world; it is the flag of the United States which renders our

"I have never met with a man, either in England or America, who has not confessed it as his opinion that a separation between the countries would take place one time or other; and there is no instance in which we have shown less judgment, than in endeavoring to describe what we call the ripeness or fitness of the continent for independence.

"As all men allow the measure, and differ only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavor, if possible, to find out the *very time*. But we need not to go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for, *the time has found us*. The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things prove the fact.

"It is not in numbers, but in a union, that our great strength lies. The continent is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, can accomplish the matter; and either more or less than this, might be fatal in its effects."—*Author.*

ships and commerce safe on the seas, or in a foreign port. Our Mediterranean passes must be obtained under the same style. All our treaties, whether of alliance, peace, or commerce, are formed under the sovereignty of the United States, and Europe knows us by no other name or title.

The division of the empire into states is for our own convenience, but abroad this distinction ceases. The affairs of each state are local. They can go no further than to itself. And were the whole worth of even the richest of them expended in revenue, it would not be sufficient to support sovereignty against a foreign attack. In short, we have no other national sovereignty than as United States. It would even be fatal for us if we had—too expensive to be maintained, and impossible to be supported. Individuals, or individual states, may call themselves what they please; but the world, and especially the world of enemies, is not to be held in awe by the whistling of a name. Sovereignty must have power to protect all the parts that compose and constitute it: and as UNITED STATES we are equal to the importance of the title, but otherwise we are not. Our union, well and wisely regulated and cemented, is the cheapest way of being great—the easiest way of being powerful,

and the happiest invention in government which the circumstances of America can admit of.—Because it collects from each state, that which, by being inadequate, can be of no use to it, and forms an aggregate that serves for all.

The states of Holland are an unfortunate instance of the effects of individual sovereignty. Their disjointed condition exposes them to numerous intrigues, losses, calamities, and enemies; and the almost impossibility of bringing their measures to a decision, and that decision into execution, is to them, and would be to us, a source of endless misfortune.

It is with confederated states as with individuals in society; something must be yielded up to make the whole secure. In this view of things we gain by what we give, and draw an annual interest greater than the capital.—I ever feel myself hurt when I hear the union, that great palladium of our liberty and safety, the least irreverently spoken of. It is the most sacred thing in the constitution of America, and that which every man should be most proud and tender of. Our citizenship in the United States is our national character. Our citizenship in any particular state is only our local distinction. By the latter we are known at home, by the former to the

world. Our great title is AMERICANS—our inferior one varies with the place.

So far as my endeavors could go, they have all been directed to conciliate the affections, unite the interests, and draw and keep the mind of the country together; and the better to assist in this foundation work of the revolution, I have avoided all places of profit or office, either in the state I live in, or in the United States [1]; kept myself at a distance from all parties and party connections, and even disregarded all private and inferior concerns: and when we take into view the great work which we have gone through, and feel, as we ought to feel, the just importance of it, we shall then see, that the little wranglings and indecent contentions of personal parley, are as dishonorable to our characters, as they are injurious to our repose.

It was the cause of America that made me an author. The force with which it struck my mind, and the dangerous condition the country appeared to me in, by courting an impossible and an unnatural reconciliation with those who were determined to reduce

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[1] This referred only to the previous two years; Paine previously had been Secretary of the Congressional Committee of Foreign Affairs, and was subsequently Clerk of the Pennsylvania Legislature.—*Editor.*

her, instead of striking out into the only line that could cement and save her, A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, made it impossible for me, feeling as I did, to be silent: and if, in the course of more than seven years, I have rendered her any service, I have likewise added something to the reputation of literature, by freely and disinterestedly employing it in the great cause of mankind, and showing that there may be genius without prostitution.

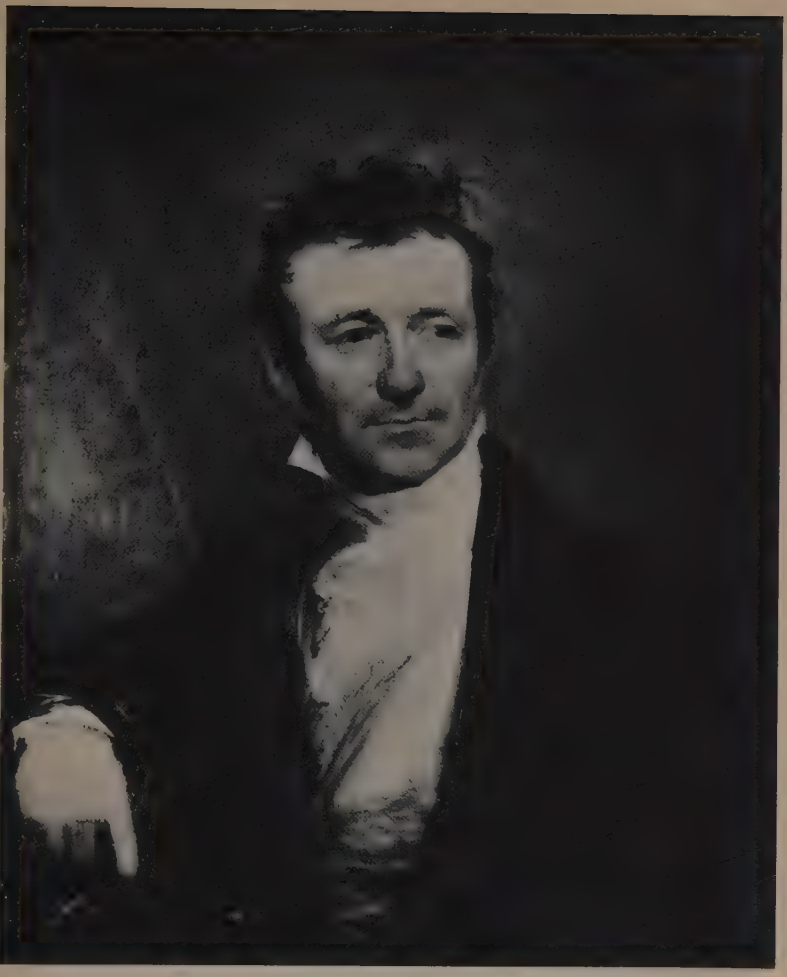
Independence always appeared to me practicable and probable, provided the sentiment of the country could be formed and held to the object: and there is no instance in the world, where a people so extended, and wedded to former habits of thinking, and under such a variety of circumstances, were so instantly and effectually pervaded, by a turn in politics, as in the case of independence; and who supported their opinion, undiminished, through such a succession of good and ill fortune, till they crowned it with success.

But as the scenes of war are closed, and every man preparing for home and happier times, I therefore take my leave of the subject. I have most sincerely followed it from beginning to end, and through all its turns and windings: and whatever country I may hereafter be in, I shall always feel an honest pride at

the part I have taken and acted, and a gratitude to nature and providence for putting it in my power to be of some use to mankind.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, April 19, 1783.



A SUPERNUMERARY CRISIS

To the People of America

THIS supplementary number of "The American Crisis" is dated by the author on the eighth anniversary of the battle at Lexington, where was shed the first blood of the Revolution. Paine tells England that she has a right to be "as foolish as she pleases," referring to the restriction to British vessels of trade with the West Indies, but he reminds England that "America has the same right to say that no British vessel shall enter ports," or that "no British manufactures shall be imported but in American bottoms." This "Crisis" is chiefly in reply to an effusion by Lord Sheffield, Member of Parliament, who had published his pamphlet, as Paine says, with "two objects: to allure Americans to purchase British manufactures, and to spirit up the British Parliament to prohibit citizens of the United States from trading to the West India islands."

IN "Rivington's New York Gazette," of December 6th, is a publication, under the appearance of a letter from London, dated September 30th; and is on a subject which demands the attention of the United States.

The public will remember that a treaty of commerce between the United States and England was set on foot last spring, and that until the said treaty could be completed, a bill was brought into the British Parliament by the then chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Pitt, to admit and legalize (as the case then required) the commerce of the United States into the British ports and dominions. But neither the one nor the

other has been completed. The commercial treaty is either broken off, or remains as it began; and the bill in Parliament has been thrown aside. And in lieu thereof, a selfish system of English politics has started up, calculated to fetter the commerce of America, by engrossing to England the carrying trade of the American produce to the West India islands.

Among the advocates for this last measure is Lord Sheffield, a member of the British Parliament, who has published a pamphlet entitled "Observations on the Commerce of the American States." The pamphlet has two objects; the one is to allure the Americans to purchase British manufactures; and the other to spirit up the British Parliament to prohibit the citizens of the United States from trading to the West India islands.

Viewed in this light, the pamphlet, though in some parts dexterously written, is an absurdity. It offends, in the very act of endeavoring to ingratiate; and his lordship, as a politician, ought not to have suffered the two objects to have appeared together. The latter alluded to, contains extracts from the pamphlet, with high encomiums on Lord Sheffield, for laboriously endeavoring (as the letter styles it) "to show the mighty advantages of retaining the carrying trade."

Since the publication of this pamphlet in England, the commerce of the United States to the West Indies, in American vessels, has been prohibited; and all intercourse, except in British bottoms, the property of and navigated by British subjects, cut off.

That a country has a right to be as foolish as it pleases, has been proved by the practice of England for many years past: in her island situation, sequestered from the world, she forgets that her whispers are heard by other nations; and in her plans of politics and commerce she seems not to know, that other votes are necessary besides her own. America would be equally as foolish as Britain, were she to suffer so great a degradation on her flag, and such a stroke on the freedom of her commerce, to pass without a balance.

We admit the right of any nation to prohibit the commerce of another into its own dominions, where there are no treaties to the contrary; but as this right belongs to one side as well as the other, there is always a way left to bring avarice and insolence to reason.

But the ground of security which Lord Sheffield has chosen to erect his policy upon, is of a nature which ought, and I think must, awaken in every American a just and strong sense of national dignity. Lord

Sheffield appears to be sensible, that in advising the British nation and Parliament to engross to themselves so great a part of the carrying trade of America, he is attempting a measure which cannot succeed, if the politics of the United States be properly directed to counteract the assumption.

But, says he, in his pamphlet, "It will be a long time before the American states can be brought to act as a nation, neither are they to be feared as such by us."

What is this more or less than to tell us, that while we have no national system of commerce, the British will govern our trade by their own laws and proclamations as they please. The quotation discloses a truth too serious to be overlooked, and too mischievous not to be remedied.

Among other circumstances which led them to this discovery none could operate so effectually as the injudicious, uncandid and indecent opposition made by sundry persons in a certain state,[1] to the recommendations of Congress last winter, for an import duty of five per cent. It could not but explain to the British a weakness in the national power of America, and encourage them to attempt restrictions on her trade, which otherwise they would not have dared to

[1] Rhode Island.—*Editor.*

hazard. Neither is there any state in the union, whose policy was more misdirected to its interest than the state I allude to, because her principal support is the carrying trade, which Britain, induced by the want of a well-centred power in the United States to protect and secure, is now attempting to take away. It fortunately happened (and to no state in the union more than the state in question) that the terms of peace were agreed on before the opposition appeared, otherwise, there cannot be a doubt, that if the same idea of the diminished authority of America had occurred to them at that time as has occurred to them since, but they would have made the same grasp at the fisheries, as they have done at the carrying trade.

It is surprising that an authority which can be supported with so much ease, and so little expense, and capable of such extensive advantages to the country, should be cavilled at by those whose duty it is to watch over it, and whose existence as a people depends upon it. But this, perhaps, will ever be the case, till some misfortune awakens us into reason, and the instance now before us is but a gentle beginning of what America must expect, unless she guards her union with nicer care and stricter honor. United, she is formidable, and that with the least possible charge a nation can be so; separated, she is a medley

of individual nothings, subject to the sport of foreign nations.

It is very probable that the ingenuity of commerce may have found out a method to evade and supersede the intentions of the British, in interdicting the trade with the West India islands. The language of both being the same, and their customs well understood, the vessels of one country may, by deception, pass for those of another. But this would be a practice too debasing for a sovereign people to stoop to, and too profligate not to be discountenanced. An illicit trade, under any shape it can be placed, cannot be carried on without a violation of truth. America is now sovereign and independent, and ought to conduct her affairs in a regular style of character. She has the same right to say that no British vessel shall enter ports, or that no British manufactures shall be imported, but in American bottoms, the property of, and navigated by American subjects, as Britain has to say the same thing respecting the West Indies. Or she may lay a duty of ten, fifteen, or twenty shillings per ton (exclusive of other duties) on every British vessel coming from any port of the West Indies, where she is not admitted to trade, the said tonnage to continue as long on her side as the prohibition continues on the other.

But it is only by acting in union, that the usurpations of foreign nations on the freedom of trade can be counteracted, and security extended to the commerce of America. And when we view a flag, which to the eye is beautiful, and to contemplate its rise and origin inspires a sensation of sublime delight, our national honor must unite with our interest to prevent injury to the one, or insult to the other.

COMMON SENSE.

NEW YORK, December 9, 1783.

RETREAT ACROSS THE DELAWARE

THIS is Paine's modest account of the American retreat across the Delaware, one of the most famous episodes in the history of the American Revolution. It appeared in the "Pennsylvania Journal," January 29, 1777, and is modest because the narrative by one of the soldiers of the gallant "Flying Camp," hurrying across New Jersey to the Delaware, with the British army in hot pursuit, says not one word about his writing, by the light of a camp-fire at Newark, the first number of "The American Crisis," ("These are the times that try men's souls,") the electrifying pamphlet which won for Washington's little army the supremely important Battle of Trenton, which was the culmination of the famous retreat. (See introduction to "Crisis I.") Paine, ever generous, is almost fulsome in his praise of Washington, but makes no mention of the fact that it was his encouraging words in "Crisis I" that inspired Washington's army to win this extremely important battle of the War for Independence.

FORT WASHINGTON being obliged to surrender, by a violent attack made by the whole British army, on Saturday the 16th of November, the Generals determined to evacuate Fort Lee, which being principally intended to preserve the communication with Fort Washington, was become in a manner useless. The stores were ordered to be removed and great part of them was immediately sent off. The enemy knowing the divided state of our army, and that the terms of the soldiers' enlistments would soon expire, conceived the design of penetrating into the Jerseys, and hoped, by pushing their successes, to be completely victorious. Accordingly, on

Wednesday morning, the 20th November, it was discovered that a large body of British and Hessian troops had crossed the North River, and landed about six miles above the fort. As our force was inferior to that of the enemy, the fort unfinished, and on a narrow neck of land, the garrison was ordered to march for Hackensack bridge, which, though much nearer the enemy than the fort, they quietly suffered our troops to take possession of. The principal loss suffered at Fort Lee was that of the heavy cannon, the greatest part of which was left behind. Our troops continued at Hackensack bridge and town that day and half of the next, when the inclemency of the weather, the want of quarters, and approach of the enemy, obliged them to proceed to Aquaconack, and from thence to Newark; a party being left at Aquaconack to observe the motions of the enemy. At Newark our little army was reinforced by Lord Sterling's and Colonel Hand's brigades, which had been stationed at Brunswick. Three days after our troops left Hackensack, a body of the enemy crossed the Passaic above Aquaconack, made their approaches slowly towards Newark, and seemed extremely desirous that we should leave the town without their being put to the trouble of fighting for it. The distance from Newark to Aquaconack is nine miles, and they

were three days in marching that distance. From Newark our retreat was to Brunswick, and it was hoped the assistance of the Jersey Militia would enable General Washington to make the Banks of the Raritan the bounds of the enemy's progress; but on the 1st of December the army was greatly weakened, by the expiration of the terms of the enlistments of the Maryland and Jersey Flying Camp; and the militia not coming in so soon as was expected, another retreat was the necessary consequence. Our army reached Trenton on the 4th of December, continued there till the 7th, and then, on the approach of the enemy, it was thought proper to pass the Delaware.

This retreat was censured by some as pusillanimous and disgraceful; but, did they know that our army was at one time less than a thousand effective men, and never more than 4000,—that the number of the enemy was at least 8000, exclusive of their artillery and light horse,—that this handful of Americans retreated *slowly* above 80 miles without losing a dozen men—and that suffering themselves to be forced to an action, would have been their entire destruction —did they know this, they would never have censured it at all—they would have called it prudent

—posterity will call it glorious—and the names of Washington and Fabius will run parallel to eternity.

The enemy, intoxicated with success, resolved to enjoy the fruits of their conquest. Fearless of an attack from this side the river, they cantoned in parties at a distance from each other, and spread misery and desolation wherever they went. Their rage and lust, their avarice and cruelty, knew no bounds; and murder, ravishment, plunder, and the most brutal treatment of every sex and age, were the first acts that signalized their conquest. And if such were their outrages on the partial subjection of a few villages —good God! what consummate wretchedness is in store for that state over which their power shall be fully established.

While the enemy were in this situation, their security was increased by the captivity of General Lee, who was unfortunately taken in the rear of his army, December 13th, at Baskinridge by a party of light-horse, commanded by Colonel Harcourt. The fortune of our arms was now at its lowest ebb—but the tide was beginning to turn—the militia of this city [Philadelphia] had joined General Washington—the junction of the two armies was soon after effected —and the back countries of this State, aroused by the distresses of America, poured out their yeomanry

to the assistance of the continental army. General Washington began now to have a respectable force, and resolved not to be idle. On the 26th of December he crossed the Delaware, surprised three regiments of Hessians, and with little or no loss, took near a thousand prisoners.[1]

Soon after this manœuvre, and while the enemy were collecting their scattered troops at Princeton and Brunswick, General Washington crossed the Delaware with all his army. On the 2d of January the enemy began to advance towards Trenton, which they entered in the afternoon, and there being nothing but a small creek between the two armies, a general engagement was expected next day. This it was manifestly our advantage to avoid; and by a master stroke of generalship, General Washington freed himself from his disagreeable situation, and surprised a party of the enemy in Princeton, which obliged their main body to return to Brunswick.

[1] The editor of the *Pennsylvania Journal* here inserted Washington's letter to Congress, December 27, 1776.—*Editor.*

LETTER TO FRANKLIN, IN PARIS [1]

THOMAS PAINE'S letter to his old friend, Benjamin Franklin, then the United States Minister in Paris, is an exceedingly interesting account of a very trying period of the Revolutionary War. It is a detailed and important record of the events at that time in the young nation's history, when Philadelphia was taken and occupied by the British, and the American seat of government was shifted, necessarily, from town to town, hard pressed by the enemy. This letter was written May 16, 1778, in York, Pennsylvania, where the Congress had taken up quarters. Paine, as the active Secretary of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, informs the American Minister in Paris of what had happened in America during his absence. No one was more competent to write about these matters than Paine. It will be remembered that it was Franklin who induced Paine to emigrate to America, thereby hastening the Revolution.

YOUR favor of October 7th did not come to me till March. I was at Camp when Captain Folger arrived with the Blank Packet.[2] The private letters were, I believe, all safe. Mr. [President] Laurens forwarded yours to Yorktown where I afterwards received it.

The last winter has been rather barren of military events, but for your amusement I send you a little history how I have passed away part of the time.

The 11th of September last I was preparing dispatches for you when the report of cannon at Brandywine interrupted my pro-

[1] In the collection of Franklin Papers, in the Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.—*Editor.*

[2] The British had intercepted dispatches from the American Commissioners in Paris.—*Editor.*

ceeding. The event of that day you have doubtless been informed of, which, excepting the enemy keeping the ground, may be deemed a drawn battle. General Washington collected his army at Chester, and the enemy's not moving towards him next day must be attributed to the disability they sustained and the burden of their wounded. On the 16th of the same month the two armies were drawn up in order of battle near White Horse on the Lancaster road, when a most violent and incessant storm of rain prevented an action. Our army sustained a heavy loss in their ammunition, the cartouche boxes, especially as they were not of the most seasoned leather, being no proof against the almost incredible fury of the weather, which obliged General Washington to draw his army up into the country until those injuries could be repaired, and a new supply of ammunition procured. The enemy in the mean time kept on the west side of Schuylkill. On Friday the 19th about one in the morning the first alarm of their crossing was given, and the confusion, as you may suppose, was very great. It was a beautiful still moonlight morning and the streets as full of men, women and children as on a market day. On the evening before I was fully persuaded that unless something was done the city [Philadelphia] would be lost; and under that anxiety

I went to Colonel Bayard, Speaker of the House of Assembly, and represented, as I very particularly knew it, the situation we were in, and the probability of saving the city if proper efforts were made for that purpose.

I reasoned thus—General Washington was about 30 miles up the Schuylkill with an army properly collected waiting for ammunition, besides which a reinforcement of 1500 men were marching from the North River to join him; and if only an appearance of defence be made in the city by throwing up works at the heads of the streets, it would make the enemy very suspicious how they threw themselves between the city and General Washington, and between two rivers, which must have been the case; for notwithstanding the knowledge which military gentlemen are supposed to have, I observe they move exceedingly cautiously on new ground, are exceedingly suspicious of villages and towns, and more perplexed at seemingly little things which they cannot clearly understand than at great ones which they are fully acquainted with. And I think it very probable that General Howe would have mistaken our necessity for a deep laid scheme and not have ventured himself in the middle of it. But admitting that he had, he must either have brought his whole army down, or a part

of it. If the whole, General Washington would have followed him, perhaps the same day, in two or three days at most, and our assistance in the city would have been material. If only a part of it, we should have been a match for them and General Washington superior to those which remained above. The chief thing was whether the citizens would turn out to defend the city. My proposal to Colonels Bayard and Bradford was to call them together the next morning, make them fully acquainted with the situation and the means and prospect of preserving themselves, and that the city had better voluntarily assess itself $50,000 for its defence than suffer an enemy to come into it. Colonels Bayard and Bradford were in my opinion, and as General Mifflin was then in town, I next went to him, acquainted him with our design, and mentioned likewise that if two or three thousand men could be mustered up whether we might depend on him to command them, for without some one to lead, nothing could be done. He declined that part, not being then very well, but promised what assistance he could. A few hours after this the alarm happened. I went directly to General Mifflin but he had set off, and nothing was done. I cannot help being of opinion that the city might have been saved, but perhaps it is better otherwise.

I stayed in the city till Sunday [September 21,] having sent my chest and everything belonging to the Foreign Committee to Trenton in a shallop. The enemy did not cross the river till the Wednesday following. Hearing on the Sunday that General Washington had moved to Sunderford I set off for that place, but learning on the road that it was a mistake and that he was six or seven miles above that place, I crossed over to Southfield, and the next morning to Trenton, to see after my chest. On the Wednesday morning I intended returning to Philadelphia, but was informed at Bristol of the enemy's crossing the Schuylkill. At this place I met Colonel Kirkbride of Pennsburg Manor, who invited me home with him. On Friday the 26th a party of the enemy about 1500 took possession of the city, and the same day an account arrived that Colonel Brown had taken 300 of the enemy at the old French lines at Ticonderoga, and destroyed all their water craft, being about 200 boats of different kinds.

On the 29th September I set off for camp without well knowing where to find it, every day occasioning some movement. I kept pretty high up the country, and being unwilling to ask questions, not knowing what company I might be in, I was there three days before I fell in with it. The army had

moved about three miles lower down that morning. The next day they made a movement about the same distance, to the 21st mile-stone on the Skippach Road, —Headquarters at John Wince's. On the 3d October in the morning they began to fortify the camp, as a deception; and about 9 at night marched for Germantown. The number of Continental troops was between 8 and 9000, besides militia, the rest remaining as guards for the security of camp. General Greene, whose quarters I was at, desired me to remain there till morning.[1] The skirmishing with the pickets began soon after. I met no person for several miles riding, which I concluded to be a good sign; after this I met a man on horseback who told me he was going to hasten on a supply of ammunition, that the enemy were broken and retreating fast, which was true. I saw several country people with arms in their hands running cross a field towards Germantown, within about five or six miles, at which I met several of the wounded on wagons, horseback, and on foot. I passed General Nash on a litter made of poles, but did not know him. I felt unwilling to ask questions

[1] Gen. Nathaniel Greene had appointed Paine an aide-de-camp on his staff, and after he was made Secretary of the Committee, Paine's honorary position on the staff was continued by Greene, who was greatly attached to Paine.—*Editor.*

lest the information should not be agreeable, and kept on. About two miles after this I passed a promiscuous crowd of wounded and otherwise who were halted at a house to refresh. Colonel Biddle D. Q. M. G. was among them, who called after me, that if I went farther on that road I should be taken, for that the firing which I heard was the enemy's. I never could, and cannot now learn, and I believe no man can inform truly the cause of that day's miscarriage.

The retreat was as extraordinary. Nobody hurried themselves. Every one marched his own pace. The enemy kept a civil distance behind, sending every now and then a shot after us, and receiving the same from us. That part of the army which I was with collected and formed on the hill on the side of the road near White Marsh church; the enemy came within three quarters of a mile and halted. The orders on retreat were to assemble that night on the back of Perkioming Creek, about 7 miles above the camp, which had orders to move. The army had marched the preceding night 14 miles, and having full 20 to march back were exceedingly fatigued. They appeared to me to be only sensible of a disappointment, not a defeat, and to be more displeased at their retreating from Germantown, than anxious

to get to their rendezvous. I was so lucky that night to get a little house about 4 miles wide of Perkioming, towards which place in the morning I heard a considerable firing, which distressed me exceedingly, knowing that our army was much harassed and not collected. However, I soon relieved myself by going to see. They were discharging their pieces, which, though necessary, prevented several parties going till next day. I breakfasted next morning at General Washington's quarters, who was at the same loss with every other to account for the accidents of the day. I remember his expressing his surprise, by saying, that at the time he supposed everything secure, and was about giving orders for the army to proceed down to Philadelphia; that he most unexpectedly saw a part (I think of the artillery) hastily retreating. This partial retreat was, I believe, misunderstood, and soon followed by others. The fog was frequently very thick, the troops young and unused to breaking and rallying, and our men rendered suspicious to each other, many of them being in red. A new army once disordered is difficult to manage, the attempt dangerous. To this may be added a prudence in not putting matters to too hazardous a trial the first time. Men must be taught *regular* fighting by practice and degrees, and though the expedition failed, it had this

good effect—that they seemed to feel themselves more important *after* it than *before*, as it was the first general attack they had ever made.

I have not related the affair at Mr. Chew's house, Germantown, as I was not there, but have seen it since. It certainly afforded the enemy time to rally —yet the matter was difficult. To have pressed on and left 500 men in the rear, might by a change of circumstances been ruinous. To attack them was a loss of time, as the house is a strong stone building, proof against any 12 pounder. General Washington sent a flag, thinking it would procure their surrender and expedite his march to Philadelphia; it was refused, and circumstances changed almost directly after.

I stayed in camp two days after the Germantown action, and lest any ill impression should get among the garrisons at Mud Island and Red Bank, and the vessels and galleys stationed there, I crossed over to the Jerseys at Trenton and went down to those places. I laid the first night on board the *Champion* Continental galley, who was stationed off the mouth of the Schuylkill. The enemy threw up a two-gun battery on the point of the river's mouth opposite the pest house. The next morning was a thick fog, and as soon as it cleared away, and we became visible to

each other, they opened on the galley, who returned the fire. The Commodore made a signal to bring the galley under the Jersey shore, as she was not a match for the battery, nor the battery a sufficient object for the galley. One shot went through the fore sail, which was all. At noon I went with Colonel [Christopher] Greene, who commanded at Red Bank [fort,] over to Fort Mifflin (Mud Island.) The enemy opened that day 2 two-gun batteries, and a mortar battery, on the fort. They threw about 30 shells into it that afternoon, without doing any damage; the ground being damp and spongy, not above five or six burst; not a man was killed or wounded. I came away in the evening, laid on board the galley, and the next day came to Colonel Kirkbride's [Bordentown, N. J.]; stayed a few days and came again into camp. An expedition was on foot the evening I got there in which I went as aide de camp to General [Nathaniel] Greene, having a volunteer commission for that purpose. The occasion was—a party of the enemy, about 1500, lay over the Schuylkill at Grey's Ferry. General McDougall with his division was sent to attack them; and Sullivan and Greene with their divisions were to favor the enterprise by a feint on the city, down the Germantown road. They set off about nine at night, and halted at daybreak,

between Germantown and the city, the advanced party at Three Miles Run. As I knew the ground I went with two light horse to discover the enemy's picket, but the dress of the light horse being white made them, I thought, too visible, as it was then twilight; on which I left them with my horse, and went on foot, till I distinctly saw the picket at Mr. Dickerson's place—which is the nearest I have been to Philadelphia since September, except once at Cooper's Ferry, as I went to the forts. General Sullivan was at Dr. Redman's house, and McDougall's beginning the attack was to be the signal for moving down to the city. But the enemy either on the approach of McDougall, or on information of it, called in their party, and the expedition was frustrated.

A cannonade, by far the most furious I ever heard, began down the river, soon after daylight, the first gun of which we supposed to be the signal; but was soon undeceived, there being no small arms. After waiting two hours beyond the time, we marched back; the cannon was then less frequent, but on the road between Germantown and White Marsh we were stunned with a report as loud as a peal from a hundred cannon at once; and turning around I saw a thick smoke rising like a pillar, and spreading from the

top like a tree. This was the blowing up of the *Augusta.* I did not hear the explosion of the *Berlin.*

After this I returned to Colonel Kirkbride's, where I stayed about a fortnight, and set off again to camp. The day after I got there Generals Greene, Wayne and Cadwallader, with a party of light horse, were ordered on a reconnoitering party towards the forts. We were out four days and nights without meeting with anything material. An East Indiaman, whom the enemy had cut down so as to draw but little water, came up, without guns, while we were on foot on Carpenter's Island, going to Province Island. Her guns were brought up in the evening in a flat, she got in the rear of the fort, where few or no guns could bear upon her, and the next morning played on it incessantly. The night following the fort was evacuated. The obstruction the enemy met with from those forts, and the *Chevaux de frise,* was extraordinary, and had it not been that the western channel, deepened by the current, being somewhat obstructed by the *Chevaux de frise* in the main river, which enabled them to bring up the light Indiaman battery, it is a doubt whether they would have succeeded at last. By that assistance they reduced the fort, and got sufficient command of the river to move some of the late sunk *Chevaux de frise.* Soon after this the fort on

Red Bank (which had bravely repulsed the enemy a little time before) was evacuated, the galleys ordered up to Bristol, and the captains of such other armed vessels as *thought* they could not pass on the eastward side of Wind Mill Island, very precipitately set them on fire. As I judged from this event that the enemy would winter in Philadelphia, I began to think of preparing for Yorktown, which however I was willing to delay, hoping that the ice would afford opportunity for new manœuvres. But the season passed very barrenly away. I stayed at Colonel Kirkbride's till the latter end of January. Commodore Haslewood, who commanded the remainder of the fleet at Trenton, acquainted me with a scheme of his for burning the enemy's shipping, which was by sending a charged boat across the river from Cooper's Ferry, by means of a rocket fixed in its stern. Considering the width of the river, the tide, and the variety of accidents that might change its direction, I thought the project trifling and insufficient; and proposed to him, that if he would get a boat properly charged, and take a batteau in tow, sufficient to bring three or four persons off, that I would make one with him and two other persons that might be relied on to go down on that business. One of the company,

Captain Blewer of Philadelphia, seconded the proposal, but the Commodore, and, what I was more surprised at, Colonel Bradford, declined it. The burning of part of the Delaware fleet, the precipitate retreat of the rest, the little service rendered by them and the great expense they were at, make the only national blot in the proceedings of the last campaign. I felt a strong anxiety for them to recover their credit, which, among others, was one motive for my proposal. After this I came to camp, and from thence to Yorktown, and published the Crisis No. 5, to General Howe. I have begun No. 6, which I intend to address to Lord North.[1]

I was not at camp when General Howe marched out on the 20th of December towards White Marsh. It was a most contemptible affair, the threatenings and seeming fury he set out with, and haste and terror the army retreated with, make it laughable. I have seen several persons from Philadelphia who assure me that their coming back was a mere uproar, and

[1] "Crisis" VI was, however, addressed to the Commissioners sent from England. "Crisis" V, addressed to General Howe, was written in Lancaster, Pa., and printed in York. It is one of the most interesting of the several numbers of the "American Crisis." The opening sentence ranks as a gem of literary composition.—*Editor.*

plainly indicated their apprehensions of a pursuit. General Howe, in his Letter to Lord George Germain, dated December 13th, represented General Washington's camp as a strongly fortified place. There was not, sir, a work thrown up in it till General Howe marched out, and then only here and there a breastwork. It was a temporary station. Besides which, our men begin to think works in the field of little use.

General Washington keeps his station at the Valley Forge. I was there when the army first began to build huts; they appeared to me like a family of beavers: every one busy; some carrying logs, others mud, and the rest fastening them together. The whole was raised in a few days, and is a curious collection of buildings in the true rustic order.

As to politics, I think we are now safely landed. The apprehension which Britain must be under from her neighbors must effectually prevent her sending reinforcements, could she procure them. She dare not, I think, in the *present* situation of affairs, trust her troops so far from home.

No commissioners are yet arrived. I think fighting is nearly over, for Britain, mad, wicked and foolish, has done her utmost. The only part for her now to act is frugality, and the only way for her to get out

of debt is to lessen her government expenses. Two millions a year is a sufficient allowance, and as much as she ought to expend exclusive of the interest of her debt. The affairs of England are approaching either to ruin or redemption. If the latter she may bless the resistance of America.

For my own part, I thought it very hard to have the country set on fire about my ears almost the moment I got into it; and among other pleasures I feel in having uniformly done my duty, I feel that of not having discredited your friendship and patronage.

I live in hopes of seeing and advising with you respecting the History of the American Revolution, as soon as a turn of affairs make it safe to take a passage for Europe. Please to accept my thanks for the pamphlets, which Mr. Temple Franklin tells me he has sent. They are not yet come to hand. Mr. and Mrs. Bache [1] are at Mainheim, near Lancaster; I heard they were well a few days ago. I laid two nights at Mr. Duffield's, in the winter. Miss Nancy Clifton was there, who said the enemy had destroyed or sold a great part of your furniture. Mr. Duffield has since been taken by them and carried into the

[1] Franklin's daughter and husband, to whom he had introduced Paine by letter when he was emigrating to America, in 1774.—*Editor.*

city, but is now at his own house.[1] I just hear they have burnt Colonel Kirkbride's, Mr. Borden's, and some other houses at Bordentown.[2] Governor Johnstone (House of Commons) has written to Mr. Robert Morris informing him of commissioners coming from England. The letter is printed in the newspapers without signature, and is dated February 5th, by which you will know it.

Please, sir, to accept this, rough and incorrect as it is, as I have [not] time to copy it fair, which was my design when I began it; besides which, paper is most exceedingly scarce.[3]

I am, dear sir, your obliged and affectionate humble servt.,

T. PAINE.

The Honble. Benj. Franklin, Esqr.

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[1] Rev. Dr. George Duffield, pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia; Associate Chaplain of the first Continental Congress, and afterwards Chaplain in the Army. Duffield was a famous revolutionary preacher, and it is said that a "reward was set on his head." Dr. Duffield's head was safely on his body, however, when Paine wrote.—*Editor.*

[2] Col. Kirkbride was one of Paine's staunchest friends, and it was at his Bordentown home that Paine made his first models of the iron bridge he invented.—*Editor.*

[3] An idea of the great scarcity of paper at this time may be gained by the fact that the Foreign Affairs Secretary mentions it in a letter to a United States Minister abroad.—*Editor.*

THE AFFAIR OF SILAS DEANE

THIS open letter to Silas Deane was published in the "Pennsylvania Packet" of December 15, 1778. Paine, as Secretary of the Congressional Committee of Foreign Affairs, was peculiarly qualified to question the actions of Deane who, in 1776, had been sent to France as commercial agent of the United States. For a time he acted as official delegate of the American States to the French Court, and, besides securing and transmitting military supplies, he induced many French officers—sometimes by lavish and ill-advised promises—to take service in the American army.

Subsequently Deane became one of the three Commissioners from Congress to France, the other two being Benjamin Franklin and Arthur Lee. Hostility developed between Deane and Lee, and Deane was charged indirectly by Lee with having misappropriated funds. Deane was involved with Beaumarchais, who, besides playing a shady part as a commissary agent, is best remembered as the author of "The Barber of Seville" and "The Marriage of Figaro."

AFTER reading a few lines of your address to the public in the Pennsylvania Packet of December 6th, I can truly say, that concern got the better of curiosity, and I felt an unwillingness to go through it. Mr. Deane must very well know that I have no interest in, so likewise am I no stranger to, his negotiations and contracts in France, his difference with his colleagues, the reason of his return to America, and the matters which have occurred since. All these are to me familiar things; and while I can but be surprised at the conduct of Mr. Deane, I lament the unnecessary torture he has imprudently occasioned. That disagreements

will arise between individuals, even to the perplexity of a State, is nothing new, but that they should be outrageously brought forward, by one whose station abroad should have taught him a delicacy of manners and even an excess of prudence, is something strange. The mind of a *living* public is quickly alarmed and easily tormented. It not only suffers by the stroke, but is frequently fretted by the cure, and ought therefore to be tenderly dealt with, and *never ought to be trifled with.* It feels first and reasons afterwards. Its jealousy keeps vibrating between the accused and the accuser, and on a failure of proof always fixes on the latter. Had Mr. Deane's address produced no uneasiness in the body he appeals to, it would have been a sign, not of tranquillity, but death: and though it is painful to see it unnecessarily tortured, it is pleasant to contemplate the living cause. Mr. Deane is particularly circumstanced. He has advantages which seldom happen, and when they do happen, ought to be used with the nicest care and strictest honor. He has the opportunity of telling his own tale and there is none to reply to him. Two of the gentlemen he so freely censures are three thousand miles off, and the other two he so freely affronts are Members of Congress; one of them likewise, Col. R. H. Lee, is absent in Virginia; and however painful

may be their feelings, they must attend the progressive conduct of the house. No Member in Congress can individually take up the matter without becoming inconsistent, and none of the public understands it sufficiently. With these advantages Mr. Deane ought to be nicely and strictly the gentleman, in his language, his assertions, his insinuations and his facts. He presents himself, as his own evidence, upon his honor, and any misrepresentation or disingenuous trifling in him will be fatal.

Mr. Deane begins his address with a general display of his services in France, and strong *insinuations* against the Hon. Arthur and William Lee, he brings his complaints down to the time of signing the treaty, and from thence to the fourth of March, when he received the following order of Congress which he inserts at large:

"In Congress, December 8, 1777. Whereas it is of the greatest importance that Congress should at this critical juncture be well informed of the state of affairs in Europe. And whereas Congress have resolved that the Honorable Silas Deane, Esq., be recalled from the Court of France, and have appointed another Commissioner to supply his place there. Ordered, that the committee for foreign correspondence, write to the Honorable Silas Deane, and direct him to embrace the first opportunity of returning to America, and upon his arrival to repair with all possible dispatch to Congress." Mr. Deane then says "and having

placed *my papers* and *yours* in *safety*, I left Paris the 30th to embark for my native country, on board that fleet which your great and generous ally sent out for your assistance, in *full confidence* that I should not be detained on the *business I was sent for*." [1]

I am obliged to tell Mr. Deane that this arrangement is somewhat uncandid, for on the reading it, it creates an opinion and likewise carries an appearance that Mr. Deane was only *sent* for, as the necessary and proper person from whom Congress might obtain a history of their affairs, and learn the character of their foreign agents, commissioners and ambassadors, after which Mr. Deane was to return. Is Mr. Deane so little master of address as not to know that censure may be politely conveyed by an apology? For however Mr. Deane may choose to represent or misrepresent the matter, the truth is that *his* contracts and engagements in France, had so involved and embarrassed Congress, that they found it necessary and resolved to *recall* him, that is *ordered him home*, to give an account of his *own* conduct, and likewise to save him from a train of disagreeable consequences, which must have arisen to him had he continued in France. I would not be supposed to insinuate, that he might be thought *unsafe*, but *unfit*.

[1] The italics are Paine's.—*Editor.*

There is a certain and necessary association of dignity between the person and the employment which perhaps did not appear when Mr. Deane was considered the ambassador. His address to the public confirms the justness of this remark. The spirit and language of it differ exceedingly from that cool penetrating judgment and refinement of manners and expression which fits, and is absolutely necessary in, the plenipotentiary. His censures are coarse and vehement, and when he speaks of himself, he begs, nay almost weeps to be believed. It was the intricacy of Mr. Deane's *own official* affairs, his multiplied contracts in France before the arrival of Dr. Franklin or any of the other Commissioners; his assuming authorities, and entering into engagements, in the time of his commercial agency, for which he had neither commission nor instruction, and the general unsettled state of his accounts, that were among the reasons that produced the motion for recalling and superseding him. Why then does Mr. Deane endeavor to lead the attention of the public to a wrong object, and bury the real reasons under a tumult of new and perhaps unnecessary suspicions?

Mr. Deane in the beginning of his address to the public says, "What I *write* to you, I would have *said* to your representatives, *their ears have been shut*

against me, by an attention to matters, which my respect for them induces me to believe were of *'more importance.'* "

In this paragraph Mr. Deane's excuse becomes his accuser, and his justification is his offence; for if the greater importance of other matters is supposed and given by himself as a reason, why he was not heard, it is likewise a sufficient reason, why he ought not to have complained that "*their ears were shut,*" and a good reason why he ought to have waited a more convenient time. But besides the inconsistency of this charge, there is something in it that will suffer by an inquiry, and I am sorry that Mr. Deane's imprudence has obliged me to mention a circumstance which affects his honor as a gentleman, his reputation as a man. In order to be clearly understood on this head, I am obliged to go back with Mr. Deane to the time of his quitting France on account of his being recalled.

"I left Paris," says Mr. Deane, "on the 30th of March, 1778 to embark for my native country, having placed *'my papers and yours in safety.'* " Would anybody have supposed that a gentleman in the character of a commercial agent, and afterwards in that of a public minister, would return home after seeing himself both recalled and superseded, and not bring with

him his papers and vouchers? And why he has done so must appear to every one exceedingly unaccountable. After Mr. Deane's arrival he had *two audiences* with Congress in August last, in neither of which did he offer the least charge against the gentleman he has so loudly upbraided in his address to the public: neither has he yet accounted for his expenditure of public money, which, as it might have been done by a written state of accounts, might for that reason have been done at any time, and was a part of the business which required an audience.

There is something curiously intricate and evasive in Mr. Deane's saying in his address, that he left France "*in full confidence* that he should not be detained on the *business he was sent for.*" And the only end it can answer to him is to furnish out a present excuse for not producing his papers. Mr. Deane had no right, either from the literal or implied sense of the resolution itself, to suppose that he should return to France in his former public character, or that he was "*sent for,*" as he styles it, on any other personal business than that which related to himself. Mr. Deane must be sensible, if he will but candidly reflect, that as an agent only, he greatly exceeded his line and embarrassed the Congress, the continent, the army and himself.

Mr. Deane's address to the public is dated "Nov." —but without any day of the month; and here a new scene of ungenteel evasion opens. On the last day of that month, viz. the 30th, he addressed a letter to Congress signifying his intentions of returning to France, and pressing to have his affairs brought to some conclusion, which, I presume, on account of the absence of his papers could not well be done; therefore Mr. Deane's address to the public must be written before the 30th, and consequently before his letter to Congress, which carries an appearance of its being only a feint in order to make a confused diversion in his favor at the time his affairs should come under consideration.

What favors this opinion, is that on the next day, that is December 1st, and partly in consequence of Mr. Deane's letter to them of the 30th, the Congress entered the following resolution.

"In Congress December 1st, 1778.—*Resolved*, That after tomorrow Congress will meet two hours at least each evening, beginning at six o'clock, Saturday evening excepted, until the present state of their foreign affairs be fully considered."

As an inquiry into the state of foreign affairs naturally and effectually included all and every part of

Mr. Deane's, he was thereupon regularly notified by letter to attend; and on the *fourth* he wrote again to Congress, acquainting them with his having received that notification and expressed his thanks; yet on the day following, viz. the *fifth* he published his extraordinary address in the newspapers, which, on account of its unsupported matter, the fury of its language and temper, and its inconsistency with other parts of his conduct, is incompatible with that character (which on account of the station he had been honored with, and the sense that should have impressed him in consequence thereof) he ought to have maintained.

On the appearance of Mr. Deane's address of the fifth, the public became jealously uneasy, and well they might. They were unacquainted with the train of circumstances that preceded and attended it, and were naturally led to suppose, that Mr. Deane, on account of the station he had filled, must be too much a gentleman to deceive them. It was Mr. Deane's particular fortune to grow into consequence from accident. Sent to France as a commercial agent under the appointment of a committee, he rose as a matter of convenience to the station of a Commissioner of Congress; and with what dignity he might fill out that character, the public will judge from his

conduct since; and perhaps be led to substitute convenience as an excuse for the appointment.

A delicacy of difficulties likewise arose in Congress on the appearance of the said address; for setting aside the matter, the irregular manner of it, as a proceeding, was a breach of decency; and as Mr. Deane after being notified to attend an inquiry into foreign affairs, had circumstantially withdrawn from that mode, by appealing to the public, and at the same time said "*their ears were shut against him,*" it was therefore given as a reason by some, that to take any notice of Mr. Deane in the interim would look like suppressing his public information, if he had any to give; and consequently would imply dishonor on the House,—and that as he had transferred his case to the public, before it had been rejected by the Congress, he ought therefore to be left with the public, till he had done with them and they with him; and that whether his information was true or not, it was an insult on the people, because it was making them the ladder on which he insulted their representatives by an unjust complaint of neglect. Others who might anticipate the anxiety of the public, and apprehend discontents would arise from a supposed inattention, were for adopting measures to prevent them, and of consequence inclined to a different

line of conduct, and this division of sentiment on what might be supposed the honor of the House, occasioned the then *President,* Henry Laurens, Esq., who adhered to the former opinion, to resign the chair. The majority on the sentiments was a single vote. In this place I take the liberty of remarking, for the benefit of succeeding generations, that the Honorable President before mentioned, having filled that station for one year in October last, made his resignation of the presidency at the expiration of the year, lest any example taken from his continuance might have become inconvenient. I have an additional satisfaction in mentioning this useful historical anecdote, because it is done wholly unknown to the gentleman to whom it relates, or to any other gentleman in or out of Congress. He was replaced by a unanimous vote. But to return to my narration—

In the Pennsylvania Packet of December 8th, Francis Lightfoot Lee, Esq., brother to the gentleman so rudely treated in Mr. Deane's publication, and the only one now present, put in a short address to the public, requesting a suspension of their judgment till the matter could be fully investigated by those whose immediate business it became: meaning Congress. And Mr. Deane in the paper of the 10th published another note, in which he informs, "that the Honor-

able Congress did, on Saturday morning the 5th instant, assign Monday evening to hear him." But why does Mr. Deane conceal the resolution of Congress of December 1st, in consequence of which he was notified to attend regularly an inquiry into the state of foreign affairs? By so doing, he endeavors to lead the public into a belief that his being heard on Monday was extorted purely in consequence of his address of the 5th, and that otherwise he should not have been heard at all. I presume Congress are anxious to hear him, and to have his accounts arranged and settled; and if this should be the case, why did Mr. Deane leave his papers in France, and now complain that his affairs are not concluded? In the same note Mr. Deane likewise says, "that Congress did on that evening, Monday, resolve, that Mr. Deane do report in writing, as soon as may be, his agency of their affairs in Europe, together with any intelligence respecting their foreign affairs which he may judge proper." But why does Mr. Deane omit giving the remaining part of the resolution, which says, "That Mr. Deane be informed, that if he has anything to communicate to Congress in the interim of *immediate importance*, that he should be heard tomorrow evening." I can see no propriety, in omitting this part, unless Mr. Deane concluded that by pub-

lishing it he might put a quick expiration to his credit by his not being able to give the wondrous information he had threatened in his address. In the conclusion of this note, Mr. Deane likewise says, "I therefore conceive that I cannot, with propriety, continue my narrative at present. In the mean time I submit it to the good sense of the public, whether I ought to take any notice of a publication signed Francis Lightfoot Lee, opposed to *stubborn and undeniable facts.*"

Thus far I have compared Mr. Deane with himself, and whether he has been candid or uncandid, consistent or inconsistent, I leave to the judgment of those who read it. Mr. Deane cannot have the least right to think that I am moved by any party difference or personal antipathy. He is a gentleman with whom I never had a syllable of dispute, nor with any other person upon his account. Who are his friends, his connections, or his foes, is wholly indifferent to me, and what I have written will be a secret to everybody till it comes from the press. The convulsion which the public were thrown into by his address will, I hope, justify my taking up a matter in which I should otherwise have been perfectly silent; and whatever may be its fate my intention is a good one; besides which there was no other person who knew

the affair sufficiently, or knowing it, could confidently do it, and yet it was necessary to be done.

I shall now take a short review of what Mr. Deane calls "*stubborn and undeniable facts.*" Mr. Deane must be exceedingly unconversant both with terms and ideas, not to distinguish even between a wandering probability and a fact; and between a forced inclination and a proof; for admitting every circumstance of information in Mr. Deane's address to be true, they are still but circumstances, and his deductions from them are hypothetical and inconclusive.

Mr. Deane has involved a gentleman in his unlimited censure, whose fidelity and personal qualities I have been well acquainted with for three years past; and in respect to an absent injured friend, Colonel Richard Henry Lee, I will venture to tell Mr. Deane, that in any style of character in which a gentleman may be spoken of, Mr. Deane would suffer by a comparison. He has one defect which perhaps Mr. Deane is acquainted with, the misfortune of having but one hand.

The charges likewise which he advances against the Honorable Arthur and William Lee are, to me, circumstantial evidences of Mr. Deane's unfitness for a public character; for it is the business of a foreign minister to learn other men's secrets and keep their

own. Mr. Deane has given a short history of Mr. Arthur Lee and Dr. Berkenhout in France, and he has brought the last mentioned person again on the stage in America. There is something in this so exceedingly weak, that I am surprised that any one who would be thought a man of sense, should risk his reputation upon such a frivolous tale; for the event of the story, if any can be produced from it, is greatly against himself.

He says that a correspondence took place in France between Dr. Berkenhout and Mr. [Arthur] Lee; that Mr. Lee showed part of the correspondence to Dr. Franklin and himself; and that in order to give the greater weight to Dr. Berkenhout's remarks he gave them to understand, that Dr. Berkenhout was in the secrets of the British Ministry. What Mr. Deane has related this for, or what he means to infer from it, I cannot understand; for the political inference ought to be, that if Mr. Lee really thought that Dr. Berkenhout was in the secrets of the British Ministry, he was therefore the very person with whom Mr. Lee ought, as an ambassador, to cultivate a correspondence, and introduce to his colleagues, in order to discover what those secrets were, that they might be transmitted to America; and if Mr. Deane acted otherwise, he unwisely mistook his own character. How-

ever, this I can assure Mr. Deane, upon my own knowledge, that more and better information has come from Mr. Lee than ever came from himself; and how or where he got it, is not a subject fit for public inquiry: unless Mr. Deane means to put a stop to all future informations. I can likewise tell Mr. Deane, that Mr. Lee was particularly commissioned by a certain body, and that under every sacred promise of inviolable secrecy, to make discoveries in England, and transmit them. Surely Mr. Deane must have left his discretion with his papers, or he would see the imprudence of his present conduct.

In the course of Mr. Deane's narrative he mentions Dr. Berkenhout again. "In September last," says he, "I was informed that Dr. Berkenhout, who I have before mentioned, was in jail in this city. I confess I was surprised, considering what I have already related, that this man should have the audacity to appear in the capital of America." But why did not Mr. Deane confront Dr. Berkenhout while he was here? Why did he not give information to Congress or to the Council before whom he was examined, and by whom he was discharged and sent back for want of evidence against him? Mr. Deane was the only person that knew anything of him, and it looks very unfavorable in him that he was silent when he should

have spoke, if he had anything to say, and now he has gone has a great deal to tell, and that about nothing. "I immediately," says Mr. Deane, "*set myself about* the measures which I conceived necessary *to investigate his plans and designs.*" This is indeed a trifling excuse, for it wanted no great deal of *setting about,* the whole secret as well as the means being with himself, and half an hour's information might have been sufficient. What Mr. Deane means by "*investigating his plans and designs,*" I cannot understand, unless he intended to have the Doctor's nativity cast by a conjurer. Yet this trifling roundabout story is one of Mr. Deane's "stubborn and undeniable facts." However it is thus far a fact, that Mr. Deane kept it a secret till the man was gone.

He likewise entertains us with a history of what passed at New York between Dr. Berkenhout and Governor Johnstone; but as he must naturally think that his readers must wonder how he came by such knowledge, he prudently supplies the defect by saying "that Providence in whom we put our trust, '*unfolded it to me*' "—*revealed it, I suppose.* As to what Dr. Berkenhout was, or what he came for, is a matter of very little consequence to us. He appeared to be a man of good moral character, of a studious turn of mind, and genteel behavior, and whether he

had whimsically employed himself, or was employed on a foolish errand by others, is a business not worth our enquiring after; he got nothing here, and to send him back was both necessary and civil. He introduced himself to General Maxwell at Elizabethtown, as knowing Mr. Arthur Lee; the General wrote a letter of information to Colonel R. H. Lee who presented the same to Congress. But it does not appear that Mr. Deane moved in the matter till a considerable time after the Doctor was sent off, and then Mr. Deane put a series of queries in the newspaper to know why he was let go. I little thought at that time that the queries were Mr. Deane's, as they really appeared to me to be the produce of some little mind.

Mr. Deane likewise tells us that Mr. A. Lee was suspected by some of our best friends because of his acquaintance with Lord Shelburne; and perhaps some Mr. Deane in England might find out that Lord Shelburne ought to be suspected because of his acquaintance with Mr. Lee. Mr. Deane appears to me neither to understand characters nor business, or he would not mention Lord Shelburne on such an occasion whose uniform and determined opposition to the Ministry appears to be known to everybody but Mr. Deane. Mr. Deane has given us a quotation from a letter [of Arthur Lee's] which he never saw, and had

it likewise from a gentleman in France who had never seen it, but who had heard it from a correspondent in England to whom it was *not* sent; and this traditionary story is another of Mr. Deane's *stubborn and undeniable facts.* But even supposing the quotation to be true, the only inference from it is naturally this, "That *the sooner England makes peace with America the better it will be for her.*" Had the intimation been given before the treaty with France was signed, it might have been justly censured, but being given after, it can have but *one* meaning, and that a *clear* one. He likewise says, that Charles Fox "declared pointedly in the House of Commons," that the treaty between France and America was signed, and as Charles Fox knows Lord Shelburne, and Lord Shelburne Mr. Lee, therefore Mr. Deane infers, "as a stubborn and undeniable fact," that Mr. Lee must tell it. Does Mr. Deane know that nothing can be long a secret in a Court, especially where the countries are but twenty miles apart, and that Charles Fox, from his ingratiating manners, is almost universally known in France?

Mr. Deane likewise supposes that William Lee, Esquire continues an Alderman of London, and either himself or some other gentleman since, under the signature of OBSERVATOR, says that "he has *consulted,* on this *point,* the Royal Calendar or Annual

Register," and finds it true. To *consult* a Calendar to find out a name must be a learned consultation indeed. An Alderman of London is neither a place at Court nor a place of profit, and if the city chooses not to expel him, it is a proof they are very good Whigs; and this is the only proved fact in Mr. Deane's Address. But there is, through the whole of it, a barbarous, unmanly and unsupported attack on absent characters, which are, perhaps, far superior to his own; an eagerness to create suspicions wherever he can catch an opportunity; an over-strained desire to be believed; and an affected air of giving importance to trifles. He accuses Mr. [Arthur] Lee of incivility to the French nation. Mr. Lee, if I can judge by his writing, is too much both of a scholar and a gentleman to deserve such a censure. He might with great justice complain of Mr. Deane's contracts with individuals; for we are fully sensible that the gentlemen which have come from France since the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee in that country are of a different rank to the generality of those with whom Mr. Deane contracted when alone. And this observation will, I believe, explain that charge no ways to Mr. Deane's honor.

Upon the whole, I cannot help considering this publication as one of the most irrational performances I

ever met with. He seems in it to pay no regard to individual safety, nor cares who he may involve in the consequences of his quarrel. He mentions names without restraint, and stops at no discovery of persons. A public man, in Mr. Deane's former character, ought to be as silent as the grave; for who would trust a person with a secret who showed such a talent for revealing? Under the pretence of doing good he is doing mischief, and in a tumult of his own creating will expose and distress himself.

Mr. Deane's address was calculated to catch several sorts of people: The rash, because they are fond of fiery things; the curious, because they are fond of curiosities; the weak, because they easily believe; the good, because they are unsuspicious; the Tory, because it comforts his discontent; the high Whig, because he is jealous of his rights; the man of national refinement, because it obscurely hints at national dishonor. The clamor, it is true, has been a popular one, and so far as it is the sign of a *living* principle, it is pleasant to see it; but when once understood it will amount to nothing, and with the rapidity that it rose it will descend.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 14, 1788.

P.S.—The writer of this has been waited on by a gentleman, whom he supposes, by his conversation, to be a friend of Mr. Deane's, and whom Mr. Deane, but not any other person, is welcome to know whenever he pleases. The gentleman informed the writer that some persons, whom he did not mention, had threatened most extraordinary violence against him (the writer of this piece) for taking the matter up; the writer asked what, whether right or wrong? and likewise informed the gentleman, that he had done it solely with a view of putting the public right in a matter which they did not understand—that the threat served to increase the necessity, and was therefore an incitement to his doing it. The gentleman, after expressing his good opinion of, and personal respect for, the writer, withdrew.

TO THE PUBLIC ON MR. DEANE'S AFFAIR

THESE further remarks on the Deane affair, which threatened violent consequences, was published in the "Pennsylvania Packet" of December 31, 1778, and January 2, 5, 7 and 9, 1779. Paine had signed his original open letter to Deane with his famous nom de plume, "Common Sense," and it had been answered in an anonymous pamphlet, signed "Plain Truth," by the Reverend William Smith, a royalist clergyman of Philadelphia. In the accompanying rejoinder, Paine specified a transaction of Deane's, as American Commercial Agent in France, involving "an unexplained contract of about two hundred thousand pounds sterling."

As a result of the indirect charges made against Deane by Arthur Lee, his fellow Commissioner to France, Deane was summoned by Congress to return to America, ostensibly to communicate information concerning the attitude of European Powers toward the United States, but actually to give an accounting of his stewardship. He failed to satisfy Congress, which persistently refused to authorize a settlement of his accounts.

HOPING this to be my last on the subject of Mr. Deane's conduct and address, I shall therefore make a few remarks on what has already appeared in the papers, and furnish you with some interesting and explanatory facts; and whatever I may conceive necessary to say of myself will conclude the piece. As it is my design to make those that can scarcely read understand, I shall therefore avoid every literary ornament, and put it in language as plain as the alphabet.

I desire the public to understand that this is not a personal dispute between Mr. Deane and me, but is a matter of business in which they are more

interested than they seemed at first to be apprised of. I rather wonder that no person was curious enough to ask in the papers how affairs stood between Congress and Mr. Deane as to money matters. And likewise, what it was that Mr. Deane has so repeatedly applied to the Congress for without success. Perhaps those two questions, properly asked, and justly answered, would have unravelled a great part of the mystery, and explained the reason why he threw out, at such a *particular time*, such a strange address. They might likewise have asked, whether there had been any former dispute between Mr. Deane and Arthur or William Lee, and what it was about? Mr. Deane's round-about charges against the Lees are accompanied with a kind of rancor that differs exceedingly from public-spirited zeal. For my part, I have but a very slender opinion of those patriots, if they can be called such, who never appear till provoked to it by a personal quarrel, and then blaze away, the hero of their own tale, and in a whirlwind of their own raising; such men are very seldom what the populace mean by the word "staunch," and it is only by a continuance of service that any public can become a judge of a man's principles.

When I first took up this matter, I expected at least to be abused, and I have not been disappointed.

It was the last and only refuge they had and, thank God, I had nothing to dread from it. I might have escaped it if I would, either by being silent, or by joining in the tumult. A gentleman, a Member of Congress, an associate, I believe, of Mr. Deane's, and one whom I would wish had not a hand in the piece signed Plain Truth, very politely asked me, a few days before Common Sense to Mr. Deane came out, whether on that subject I was *pro* or *con*. I replied, I knew no *pro* or *con*, nor any other sides than right or wrong.

Mr. Deane had objected to my putting the signature of Common Sense to my address to him, and the gentleman who came to my lodgings urged the same objections; their reasons for so doing may, I think, be easily guessed at. The signature has, I believe, an extensive reputation, and which, I trust, will never be forfeited while in my possession. As I do not choose to comply with the proposal that was made to me for changing it, therefore Mr. Plain Truth, as he calls himself, and his connections, may endeavor to take off from the credit of the signature, by a torrent of low-toned abuse without wit, matter or sentiment.

Had Mr. Deane confined himself to his proper line of conduct, he would never have been interrupted by me, or exposed himself to suspicious criticism. But

departing from this, he has thrown himself on the ocean of the public, where nothing but the firmest integrity can preserve him from becoming a wreck. A smooth and flattering tale may do for a while, but unless it can be supported with facts, and maintained by the most incontestable proof, it will fall to the ground and leave the inventor in the lurch.

On the first view of things, there is something in Mr. Deane's conduct which must appear mysterious to every disinterested man, if he will but give himself time to reflect. Mr. Deane has been arrived in America, and in this city, upwards of five months, and had he been possessed of any secrets which affected, or seemed to affect, the interest of America, or known any kind of treachery, misconduct, or neglect of duty in any of the other Commissioners, or in any other person, he ought, as an honest man, to have disclosed it immediately on his arrival, either to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, of which I have the honor to be Secretary, or to Congress. Mr. Deane has done neither, notwithstanding he has had two audiences with Congress in August last, and might at any time have laid his written information before them, or before the Committee, through whom all his foreign concerns had passed, and in whose hands, or rather

in mine, are lodged all his political correspondence, and those of other Commissioners.

From an unwillingness to expose Mr. Deane and his adherents too much, I contented myself in my first piece with showing their inconsistency rather than their intentions, and gave them room to retract by concealing their discredit. It is necessary that I should now speak a plainer language.

The public have totally mistaken this matter, and when they come to understand it rightly, they will see it in a very different light to what they at first supposed it. They seemed to conceive, and great pains have been taken to make them believe, that Mr. Deane had repeatedly applied to Congress to obtain an audience, in order to lay before them some great and important discoveries, and that the Congress had refused to hear such information. It is, gentlemen, no such thing. If Mr. Deane or any one else had told you so, they have imposed upon you.

If you attend to a part of Mr. Deane's address to you, you will find there, even from his own account, what it was that he wanted an interview with Congress for, viz. *to get some how or other through his* own *perplexed affairs, and obtain an audience of leave and departure that he might embark for France*, and which if he could have obtained, there is every reason

to believe, he would have quitted America in silence, and that the public would never have been *favored* with his address, nor I plagued with the trouble of putting it to rights. The part which I allude to is this "*and having placed my papers and yours in safety, I left Paris, in full confidence that I should not be detained in America,*" to which he adds this curious expression, "on the business I was sent for." To be "*detained*" at *home* is a new transposition of ideas, especially in a man who had been absent from it two years and a half, and serves to show that Mr. Deane was become so wonderfully foreignized that he had quite forgotten poor Connecticut.

As I shall have frequent occasions to make use of the name of Congress, I request you to suspend all kind of opinions on any supposed obligations which I am said to lie under to that body, till you hear what I have to say in the conclusion of this address, for if Mr. Deane's accounts stand as clear with them as mine do, he might very easily have brought his papers from France. I have several times repeated, and I again repeat it, that my whole design in taking this matter up, was and is, to prevent the public being imposed upon, and the event must and will convince them of it.

I now proceed to put the affair into such a straight line that you cannot misunderstand it.

Mr. Deane wrote his address to you some time in November, and kept it by him in order to publish or not as it might suit his purpose.* On the 30th day of the same month he applied by letter to Congress, and what do you think it was for? To give them any important information? No. To "tell them what he has wrote to you?" No, it was to acquaint them *that he had missed agreeable opportunities of return-*

* This is fully proved by the address itself which is dated *November,* but without any day of the month, and the same is likewise acknowledged by his blundering friend Mr. Plain Truth. His words are, "Mr. Deane, it is true, wrote his address" (dated November) "previous to his application to Congress, of the 30th of November." He certainly could not write it after, there being, unfortunately for him, but thirty days in that month; "but," continues Mr. Plain Truth, "he was determined notwithstanding some *forceable reasons,* which the *vigilant* part of the public are at no loss to *guess,* not to publish it if he could be assured of an *early* audience with Congress." Mr. Deane was in a confounded hurry, sure that he could not submit to be *detained in America* till the next day, for on that very next day, December 1st, *in consequence of his letter* the Congress, "*Resolved to spend two hours each day, beginning at six in the evening, till the state of their foreign affairs should be fully ascertained.*" This naturally included all and every part of Mr. Deane's affairs, information and everything else, and it is impossible but he (connected as he is with some late and present Members of Congress) should know immediately about it.

I should be glad to be informed what those "*forceable reasons*" are at which the vigilant part of the public "*guess*" and likewise

ing to France; dismal misfortune indeed! And that the season (of the year) is now becoming as *pressing* as the *business* which calls him *back,* and therefore he *earnestly entreated the attention of Congress,* to what? To his great information? No, to his important discoveries? No, but to his own *situation and requests.* These are, I believe, his own words.

Now it only remains to know whether Mr. Deane's official affairs were in a fit position for him to be permitted to quit America or not; and I trust, that when

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how early Mr. Deane expected an audience, since the resolution of the *next day* appears to have been too late. I am suspicious that it was too soon, and that Mr. Deane and his connections were not prepared for such an *early* examination notwithstanding he had been here upwards of five months, and if the thing is to be "*guessed*" at last, and that by the *vigilant* part of the public, I think I have as great a right to *guess* as most men, and Mr. Plain Truth, if he pleases, may *guess* what I mean; but lest he should mistake I will tell him my guess, it is, that the whole affair is a juggle to amuse the people with, in order to prevent the state of foreign affairs being inquired into, and Mr. Deane's accounts, and those he is connected with in America settled as they ought to be; and were I to go on *guessing,* I should likewise *guess* that this is the reason why his accounts are left behind, though I know many people inclined to guess that he has them with him but has forgot them; for my part I don't choose at *present* to go so far. If any one can give a better guess than I have done I shall give mine up, but as the gentlemen choose to submit it to a guess, I choose therefore to take them upon their own terms, and put in for the honor of being right. It was, I think, an *injudicious* word for them to use, especially at Christmas time.—*Author.*

I tell you, I have been Secretary for Foreign Affairs almost two years, you will allow that I must be some judge of the matter.

You have already heard what Mr. Deane's application to Congress was for. And as one of the public, under the well known signature of Common Sense, I humbly conceive, that the Congress have done that which as a faithful body of Representatives they ought to do, that is, they ordered an inquiry into the state of foreign affairs and accounts which Mr. Deane had been intrusted with, before they could, with justice to you, grant the request he asked. And this was the more necessary to be done, because Mr. Deane says he has left his papers and accounts behind him. Did ever any steward, when called upon, to surrender up his stewardship make such a weak and frivolous excuse? Mr. Deane saw himself not only *recalled* but *superseded* in his office by another person, and he could have no right to think he should *return*, nor any pretense to come away without the necessary credentials.

His friend and associate, and perhaps partner too, Mr. Plain Truth, says, that I have endeavored in my address, to "throw out a suggestion that Mr. Deane is considered by Congress as a defaulter of public money." The gentlemen seem to wince before they

are touched. I have nowhere said so, but this I will say, that his accounts are not satisfactory. Mr. Plain Truth endeavors to palliate what he cannot contradict, and with a seeming triumph assures the public "that Mr. Deane not long after his arrival laid before Congress a *general* state of the receipts and expenditures of the monies which passed through his hands"; to which Mr. Plain Truth subjoins the following extraordinary apology: "It is true the account was not accompanied with all the vouchers for the particular expenditures." And why not I ask? for without those it was no account at all; it was what the sailors call a boot account, so much money gone and the Lord knows for what. Mr. Deane had secretaries and clerks, and ought to have known better than to produce such an account to Congress, especially as his colleague Arthur Lee had declared in an office letter, which is in my possession, that he had no concern in Mr. Deane's contracts.

Neither does the excuse, which his whirligig friend Mr. Plain Truth makes for him, apply to his case; this random shot gentleman, in order to bring him as easily off as possible, says, "that any person in the least conversant with business, knows the time which is requisite for calling in manufacturers' and tradesmen's bills, and prepare accounts and vouchers for

a final settlement"; and this he mentions because Mr. Deane received his order of recall the 4th of March, and left Paris the 31st: here is, however, four weeks within a day. I shall make three remarks upon this curious excuse.

First, it is contradictory. Mr. Deane could not obtain the total or general expenditure without having the particulars, therefore he must be in the possession of the particulars. He surely did not pass away money without taking receipts, and what was due upon credit, he could only know from the bills delivered in.

Secondly, Mr. Deane's contracts did not lay in the retail way, and therefore were easily collected.

Thirdly, The accounts which it was Mr. Deane's particular duty to settle were those which he contracted in the time of being only a commercial agent in 1776, before the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Arthur Lee, which separate agency of his expired upwards of fifteen months before he left France,—and surely that was time enough,—and in which period of his agency, there happened an unexplained contract of about two hundred thousand pounds sterling. But more of this when I come to remark on the ridiculous puffs with which Mr. Plain Truth has set off Mr. Deane's pretended services in France.

Mr. Deane has not only left the public papers and accounts behind him, but he has given no information to Congress, where or in whose hands they are; he says in his address to you, that he has left them in a safe place, and this is all which is known of the matter. Does this look like business? Has it an open and candid or a mysterious and suspicious appearance? Or would it have been right in Congress to have granted Mr. Deane an audience of leave and departure in this embarrassed state of his affairs? And because they have not, his ready written November address has been thrown out to abuse them and amuse you by directing you to another object; and myself, for endeavoring to unriddle confusion, have been loaded with reproach by his partisans and partners, and represented as a writer, who like an unprincipled lawyer had let himself out for pay. Charges which the propagators of them know to be false, because some, who have encouraged the report, are Members of Congress themselves, and know my situation to be directly the reverse. But this I shall explain in the conclusion; and I give the gentlemen notice of it, that if they can make out anything against me, or prove that I ever received a single farthing, public or private, for any thing I ever wrote, they may convict me publicly, and if they do not, I hope

they will be honest enough to take shame to themselves for the falsehood they have supported. And I likewise request that they would inform the public what my salary as Secretary for Foreign Affairs is, otherwise I shall be obliged to do it myself. I shall not spare them and I beg they would not spare me. But to return—

There is something in this concealment of papers that looks like an embezzlement. Mr. Deane came so privately from France, that he even concealed his departure from his colleague Arthur Lee, of which he complains by a letter in my office, and consequently the papers are not in his hands; and had he left them with Dr. Franklin he would undoubtedly have taken the Doctor's receipt for them, and left nobody to "*guess,*" at what Mr. Deane meant by a *safe place:* A man may leave his own private affairs in the hands of a friend, but the papers of a nation are of another nature, and ought never to be trusted with any person whatever out of the direct line of business. This I conceive to be another reason which justifies Congress in not granting Mr. Deane an audience of leave and departure till they are assured where those papers are. Mr. Deane might have been taken at sea, he might have died or been cast away on his passage back from France, or he might have been settled there, as

Madame D'Eon did in England, and quarrelled afterwards as she did with the power that employed him. Many accidents might have happened by which those papers and accounts might have been totally lost, the secrets got into the hands of the enemy, and the possibility of settling the expenditure of public money forever prevented. No apology can be made for Mr. Deane, as to the danger of the seas, or their being taken by the enemy, in his attempt to bring them over himself, because it ought always to be remembered that he came in a fleet of twelve sail of the line.[1]

I shall now quit this part of the subject to take notice of a paragraph in Mr. Plain Truth.

In my piece to Mr. Deane I said, that his address was dated in November, without any day of the month, that on the last day of that month he applied to Congress, that on the 1st of December the Congress resolved to investigate the state of their foreign affairs, of which Mr. Deane had notice, and that on the fourth he informed them of his receiving that notification and expressed his thanks, yet that on the fifth he published his extraordinary address.

Mr. Plain Truth, in commenting upon this arrangement of facts has helped me to a new discovery.

[1] Had the "Letters of George III" (Donne) been published earlier Congress would not, in 1842, have made a grant of money to Deane's family.—*Editor.*

He says, that Mr. Deane's thanks of the fourth of December were only expressed to the President, Henry Laurens Esqr: for personally informing him of the resolution and other attention to his Affairs, and *not*, as I had said, *to Congress for the resolution itself*. I give him credit for this, and believe it to be true; for my opinion of the matter is, that Mr. Deane's views were to get off without any inquiry, and that the resolution referred to was his great disappointment. By all accounts which have been given both by Mr. Deane's friends and myself, we all agree in this, that Mr. Deane knew of the resolution of Congress before he published his address, and situated as he is he could not help knowing it two or three days before his address came out. Why then did he publish it, since the very thing which he ought to have asked for, viz. an inquiry into his affairs was ordered to be immediately gone into?

I wish in this place to step for a moment from the floor of office, and press it on every State, to inquire what mercantile connections any of their *late* or present delegates have had or now have with Mr. Deane, and that a precedent might not be wanting, it is important that this State, *Pennsylvania should begin*.

The uncommon fury which has been spread to support Mr. Deane cannot be altogether for his sake.

Those who were the original propagators of it, are not remarkable for gratitude. If they excel in anything it is in the contrary principle and a selfish attachment to their own interest. It would suit their plan exceedingly well to have Mr. Deane appointed Ambassador to Holland, because so situated, he would make a very convenient partner in trade or a useful factor.

In order to rest Mr. Deane on the shoulders of the public, he has been set off with the most pompous puffs—The Saviour of his Country—the Patriot of America—the True Friend of the Public—the Great Supporter of the cause in Europe,—and a thousand other full-blown bubbles, equally ridiculous and equally untrue. Never were the public more wretchedly imposed upon. An attempt was made to call a town meeting to return him thanks and to march in a body to Congress to demand justice for Mr. Deane. And this brings me to a part in Mr. Plain Truth's address to me, in which he speaks of Mr. Deane's services in France, and defies me to disprove them. If any late or present Member of Congress has been concerned in writing that piece, I think it necessary to tell him, that he either knows very little of the state of foreign affairs, or ought to blush in thus attempting to rob a friendly nation, France, of her

honors, to bestow them on a man who so little deserves them.

Mr. Deane was sent to France in the Spring, 1776, as a Commercial Agent, under the authority of the Committee which is now styled the Committee for Foreign Affairs. He had no commission of any kind from Congress; and his instructions were to assume no other character but that of a merchant; yet in this line of action Mr. Plain Truth has the ignorance to dub him a "public Minister" and likewise says,

"that before the first of December, after his arrival he had formed and cultivated the esteem of a valuable political and commercial connection, not only in France but in other parts of Europe, laid the foundation of a public loan, procured thirty thousand stand of arms, thirty thousand suits of clothes, more than two hundred and fifty pieces of brass cannon, and a great amount of tents and military stores, provided vessels to transport them, and in spite of various and almost inconceivable obstructions great part of these articles were shipped and arrived in America before the operations of the campaign in 1777." To which Mr. Plain Truth adds, "That he has had the means of being acquainted with all these circumstances, avows them to be facts, and *defies* Common Sense or any other person to disprove them."

Poor Mr. Plain Truth, and his avower Mr. Clarkson, have most unfortunately for them challenged the wrong person, and fallen into the right hands when

they fell into mine, for without stirring a step from the room I am writing in, or asking a single question of any one, I have it in my power, not only to contradict but disprove it.

It is, I confess, a nice point to touch upon, but the necessity of undeceiving the public with respect to Mr. Deane, and the right they have to know the early friendship of the French nation towards them at the time of their greatest wants, will justify my doing it. I feel likewise the less difficulty in it, because the whole affair respecting those supplies has been in the hands of the enemy at least twelve months, and consequently the necessity for concealing it is superseded. Besides which, the two nations, viz. France and England, being now come to an open rupture makes the secret unnecessary. It was immediately on the discovery of this affair by the enemy fifteen months ago, that the British Ministry began to change their ground and planned what they call their Conciliatory Bills. They got possession of this secret by stealing the dispatches of October, 1777, which should have come over by Captain Folger, and this likewise explains the controversy which the British Commissioners carried on with Congress, in attempting to prove that England had planned what they called her Conciliatory Bills, before France moved towards a treaty; for even ad-

mitting that assertion to be true, the case is, that they planned those bills in consequence of the knowledge they had stolen.*

The supplies here alluded to, are those which were sent from France in the *Amphitrite*, *Seine* and *Mercury* about two years ago. They had at first the ap-

* When Captain Folger arrived at Yorktown [Pa.] he delivered a packet which contained nothing but blank paper, that had been put under the cover of the dispatches which were taken out. This fraud was acted by the persons to whom they were first entrusted to be brought to America, and who afterwards absconded, having given by way of deception the blank packet to Captain Folger. The Congress were by this means left without any information of European affairs. It happened that a private letter from Dr. Franklin to myself, in which he wrote to me respecting my undertaking the history of the present revolution, and engaged to furnish me with all his materials towards the completion of that work, escaped the pilfering by not being enclosed in the packet with the dispatches. I received this letter at Lancaster through the favor of the President, Henry Laurens, Esqr., and as it was the only letter which contained any authentic intelligence of the general state of our affairs in France, I transmitted it again to him to be communicated to Congress. This likewise was the only intelligence which was received from France from May, 1777, to May 2d, 1778, when the treaty arrived; wherefore, laying aside the point controverted by the British Commissioners as to which moved first, France or England, it is evident that the resolutions of Congress of April 22d, 1778, for totally rejecting the British Bills, were grounded entirely on the determination of America to support her cause,—a circumstance which gives the highest honor to the resolutions alluded to, and at the same time gives such a character of her fortitude as heightens her value, when considered as an ally, which though it had at that time taken place, was, to her, perfectly unknown.—*Author.*

pearance of a present, but whether so, or on credit, the service was nevertheless a great and friendly one, and though only part of them arrived the kindness is the same. A considerable time afterwards the same supplies appeared under the head of a charge amounting to about two hundred thousand pounds sterling, and it is the unexplained contract I alluded to when I spoke of the pompous puffs made use of to support Mr. Deane. On the appearance of this charge the Congrass were exceedingly embarrassed as to what line of conduct to pursue. To be insensible of a favor, which has before now been practised between nations, would have implied a want of just conceptions; and to have refused it would have been a species of proud rusticity. To have asked the question was both difficult and awkward; to take no notice of it would have been insensibility itself; and to have seemed backward in payment, if they were to be paid for, would have impeached both the justice and the credit of America. In this state of difficulties such inquiries were made as were judged necessary, in order that Congress might know how to proceed. Still nothing satisfactory could be obtained. The answer which Mr. Deane signed so lately as February 16th last past (and who ought to know most of the matter, because the *shipping* the supplies was while he acted alone)

is as ambiguous as the rest of his conduct. I will venture to give it, as there is no political secret in it and the matter wants explanation.

"Hear that Mr. B [eaumarchais] has sent over a person to demand a large sum of you on account of arms, ammunition, etc.,—think it will be best for you to leave that matter to be settled here (France), as there is a mixture in it of public and private concern which you cannot so well develop."

Why did not Mr. Deane complete the contract so as it might be developed, or at least state to Congress any difficulties that had arisen? When Mr. Deane had his two audiences with Congress in August last, he objected, or his friends for him, against his answering the questions that might be asked him, and the ground upon which the objection was made, was, because *a man could not legally be compelled to answer questions that might tend to criminate himself.*— Yet this is the same Mr. Deane whose address you saw in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of December 5 signed Silas Deane.

Having thus shown the loose manner of Mr. Deane's doing business in France, which is rendered the more intricate by his leaving his papers behind, or his not producing them; I come now to inquire into what degree of merit or credit Mr. Deane is en-

titled to as to the procuring these supplies, either as a present or a purchase.

Mr. Plain Truth has given him the whole. Mr. Plain Truth therefore knows nothing of the matter, or something worse. If Mr. Deane or any other gentleman will procure an order from Congress to inspect an account in my office, or any of Mr. Deane's friends in Congress will take the trouble of coming themselves, I will give him or them my attendance and show them in a handwriting which Mr. Deane is well acquainted with, that the supplies, he so pompously plumes himself upon, were promised and engaged, and that as a present, before he ever *arrived* in France, and the part that fell to Mr. Deane was only to see it done, and how he has performed that service, the public are now acquainted with. The last paragraph in the account is, "*Upon Mr. Deane's arrival in France the business went into his hands and the aids were at length embarked in the Amphitrite, Mercury and Seine.*"

What will Mr. Deane or his aide-de-camp say to this, or what excuse will they make now? If they have met with any cutting truths from me, they must thank themselves for it. My address to Mr. Deane was not only moderate but civil, and he and his adherents had much better have submitted to it quietly,

than provoked more material matter to appear against them. I had at that time all the facts in my hands which I have related since, or shall yet relate in my reply. The only thing I aimed at in the address, was, to give out just as much as might prevent the public from being so grossly imposed upon by them, and yet save Mr. Deane and his adherents from appearing too wretched and despicable. My fault was a misplaced tenderness, which they must now be fully sensible of, and the misfortune to them, is, that I have not yet done.

Had Mr. Plain Truth only informed the Public that Mr. Deane had been industrious in promoting and forwarding the sending the supplies, his assertion would have passed uncontradicted by me, because I must naturally suppose that Mr. Deane would do no otherwise; but to give him the whole and sole honor of *procuring* them, and that, without yielding any part of the honor to the public spirit and good disposition of those who furnished them, and who likewise must in every shape have put up with the total loss of them had America been overpowered by her enemies, is, in my opinion, placing the reputation and affection of our allies not only in a disadvantageous, but in an unjust point of view, and concealing from the public what they ought to know.

Mr. Plain Truth declares that he knows all the circumstances, why then did he not place them in a proper line, and give the public a clear information how they arose? The proposal for sending over those supplies, appears to have been originally made by some public spirited gentleman in France, before ever Mr. Deane arrived there, or was known or heard of in that country, and to have been communicated (personally by Mr. Beaumarchais, the gentleman mentioned in the letter signed J. L. which letter is given at length by Mr. Plain Truth) to Mr. Arthur Lee while resident in London about three years ago. From Mr. B's manner of expression, Mr. Lee understood the supplies to be a present, and has signified it in that light. It is very easy to see that if America had miscarried, they *must* have been a present, which probably adds explanation to the matter. But Mr. Deane is spoken of by Mr. Plain Truth, as having an importance of his *own*, and procuring those supplies through that importance; whereas he could only rise and fall with the country that empowered him to act, and be *in* or *out* of credit, as to money matters, from the same cause and in the same proportion; and every body must suppose, that there were greater and more original wheels at work than he was capable of setting in motion. Exclusive of the matter being begun

before Mr. Deane's arrival, Mr. Plain Truth has given him the whole merit of every part of the transaction. America and France are wholly left out of the question, the former as to her growing importance and credit, from which all Mr. Deane's consequence was derived, and the latter, as to her generosity in furnishing those supplies, at a time, when the risk of losing them appears to have been as great as our want of them.

I have always understood thus much of the matter, that if we did not succeed no payment would be required, and I think myself fully entitled to believe, and to publish my belief, that whether Mr. Deane had arrived in France or not, or any other gentleman in his stead, those same supplies would have found their way to America. But as the nature of the contract has not been explained by any of Mr. Deane's letters and is left in obscurity by the account he signed the 16th of February last, which I have already quoted, therefore the full explanation must rest upon other authority.

I have been the more explicit on this subject, not so much on Mr. Deane's account, as from a principle of public justice. It shows, in the first instance, that the greatness of the American cause drew, at its first beginning, the attention of Europe, and that the just-

ness of it was such as appeared to merit support; and in the second instance, that those who are now her allies, prefaced that alliance by an early and generous friendship; yet, that we might not attribute too much to human or auxiliary aid, so unfortunate were those supplies, that only one ship out of the three arrived. The *Mercury* and *Seine* fell into the hands of the enemy.

Mr. Deane, in his address, speaks of himself as "*sacrificed for the aggrandizement of others*" and promises to inform the public of "*what he has done and what he has suffered.*" What Mr. Deane means by being *sacrificed* the Lord knows, and what he has *suffered* is equally as mysterious. It was his good fortune to be situated in an elegant country and at a public charge, while we were driven about from pillar to post. He appears to know but little of the hardships and losses which his countrymen underwent in the period of his fortunate absence. It fell not to his lot to turn out to a winter's campaign, and sleep without tent or blanket. He returned to America when the danger was over, and has since that time suffered no personal hardship. What then are Mr. Deane's *sufferings* and what the sacrifices he complains of? Has he lost money in the public service? I believe not. Has he got any? That I cannot tell.

I can assure him that I have not, and he, if he pleases, may make the same declaration.

Surely the Congress might recall Mr. Deane if they thought proper, without an insinuated charge of injustice for so doing. The authority of America must be little indeed when she cannot change a Commissioner without being insulted by him. And I conceive Mr. Deane as speaking in the most disrespectful language of the authority of America when he says in his address, that in December 1776 he was "honored with one colleague, and *saddled* with another." Was Mr. Deane to dictate who should be Commissioner, and who should not? It was time, however, to saddle him, as he calls it, with somebody, as I shall show before I conclude.

When we have elected our Representatives, either in Congress or in the Assembly, it is for our own good that we support them in the execution of that authority they derive from us. If Congress is to be abused by every one whom they may appoint or remove, there is an end to all useful delegation of power, and the public accounts in the hands of individuals will never be settled. There has, I believe, been too much of this work practised already, and it is time that the public should now make those mat-

ters a point of consideration. But who will begin the disagreeable talk?

I look on the independence of America to be as firmly established as that of any country which is at war. Length of time is no guarantee when arms are to decide the fate of a nation. Hitherto our whole anxiety has been absorbed in the means for supporting our independence, and we have paid but little attention to the expenditure of money; yet we see it daily depreciating, and how should it be otherwise when so few public accounts are settled, and new emissions continually going on?—I will venture to mention one circumstance which I hope will be sufficient to awaken the attention of the public to this subject. In October, 1777, some books of the Commercial Committee, in which, among other things, were kept the accounts of Mr. Thomas Morris, appointed a commercial agent in France, were by Mr. Robert Morris's request taken into his possession to be settled, he having obtained from the council of this State six months' leave of absence from Congress to settle his affairs. In February following those books were called for by Congress, but not being completed were not delivered. In September, 1778 Mr. Morris returned them to Congress, in, or nearly in, the same unsettled state he took them, which, with the death of

Mr. Thomas Morris, may probably involve those accounts in further embarrassment. The amount of expenditure on those books is considerably above two millions of dollars.*

I now quit this subject to take notice of a paragraph in Mr. Plain Truth, relative to myself. It never fell to my lot to have to do with a more illiberal set of men than those of Mr. Deane's advocates who were concerned in writing that piece. They have neither wit, manners nor honesty; an instance of which I shall now produce. In speaking of Mr. Deane's contracts with individuals in France I said

* There is an article in the Constitution of this State, which, were it at this time introduced as a Continental regulation, might be of infinite service; I mean a Council of *censors* to inspect into the expenditure of public money and call defaulters to an account. It is, in my opinion, one of the best things in the Constitution, and that which the people ought never to give up, and whenever they do they will deserve to be cheated. It has not the most favorable look that those who are hoping to succeed to the government of this State, by a change in the Constitution, are so anxious to get that article abolished. Let expenses be ever so great, only let them be fair and necessary, and no good citizen will grumble.

Perhaps it may be said, Why do not the Congress do those things? To which I might, by another question reply, Why don't you support them when they attempt it? It is not quite so easy a matter to accomplish that point in Congress as perhaps many conceive; men will always find friends and connections among the body that appoints them, which will render all such inquiries difficult.—*Author.*

in my address "We are all fully sensible, that the gentlemen who have come from France since the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee in that Country are of a different rank from *the generality of those* with whom Mr. Deane contracted when alone." These are the exact words I used in my address.

Mr. Plain Truth has misquoted the above paragraph into his piece, and that in a manner, which shows him to be a man of little reading and less principle. The method in which he has quoted it is as follows: "All are fully sensible that the gentlemen who came from France since the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee in that country, are of a different rank from those with whom Mr. Deane contracted when acting separately." Thus by leaving out the words "*the generality of,*" Mr. Plain Truth has altered the sense of my expression, so as to suit a most malicious purpose in his own, which could be no other, than that of embroiling me with the French gentlemen that have remained; whereas it is evident, that my mode of expression was intended to do justice to such characters as Fleury and Touzard, by making a distinction they are clearly entitled to. Mr. Plain Truth not content with unjustly subjecting me to the misconceptions of those gentlemen, with whom even explanation was difficult on account of the language, but in addition to his injus-

tice, endeavored to provoke them to it by calling on them, and reminding them that they were the "*Guardians of their own honor.*" And I have reason to believe, that either Mr. Plain Truth or some of the party did not even stop here, but went so far as personally to excite them on. Mr. Fleury came to my lodgings and complained that I had done him great injustice, but that he was sure I did not intend it, because he was certain that I knew him better. He confessed to me that he was pointed at and told that I meant him, and he withal desired, that as I knew his services and character, that I would put the matter right in the next paper. I endeavored to explain to him that the mistake was not mine, and we parted. I do not remember that in the course of my reading I ever met with a more illiberal and malicious misquotation, and the more so when all the circumstances are taken with it. Yet this same Mr. Plain Truth, whom no body knows, has the impertinence to give himself out to be a man of "*education*" and to inform the public that "he is not a writer from *inclination* much less by *profession*," to which he might safely have added, *still less by capacity, and least of all by principle.* As Mr. Clarkson has undertaken to avow the piece signed Plain Truth, I shall therefore consider him as legally accountable for the apparent

malicious intentions of this mis-quotation, and he may get whom he pleases to speak or write a defense of him.

I conceive that the *general* distinction I referred to between those with whom Mr. Deane contracted when alone, and those who have come from France since the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee in that Country, is sufficiently warranted. That gallant and amiable officer and volunteer the Marquis de Lafayette, and some others whom Mr. Plain Truth mentions, did not come from France till after the arrival of the additional Commissioners, and proves my assertion to be true. My remark is confined to the many and unnecessary ones with which Mr. Deane burdened and distracted the army. If he acquired any part of his popularity in France by this means he made the continent pay smartly for it. Many thousand pounds it cost America, and that in money totally sunk, on account of Mr. Deane's injudicious contracts, and what renders it the more unpardonable is that by the instructions he took with him, he was *restricted* from making them, and consequently by having no authority had an easy answer to give to solicitations. It was Doctor Franklin's answer as soon as he arrived and might have been Mr. Deane's. Gentlemen of science or literature or

conversant with the polite or useful arts, will, I presume, always find a welcome reception in America, at least with persons of a liberal cast, and with the bulk of the people.

In speaking of Mr. Deane's contracts with foreign officers, I concealed out of pity to him a circumstance that must have sufficiently shown the necessity of recalling him, and, either his great want of judgment, or the danger of trusting him with discretionary power. It is no less than that of his throwing out a proposal, in one of his last foreign letters, for contracting with a German prince [1] to command the American army. For my own part I was no ways surprised when I read it, though I presume almost everybody else will be so when they hear it, and I think when he got to this length it was time to *saddle* him.

Mr. Deane was directed by the Committee which employed him to engage four able engineers in France, and beyond this he had neither authority nor commission. But disregarding his instructions (a fault criminal in a negotiator) he proceeded

[1] In Donne's "Correspondence of George III with Lord North" (ii., p. 116), is a letter of the king's which shows that Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, brother-in-law of George III, had actually received such a proposal.—*Editor.*

through the several degrees of subalterns, to captains, majors, lieutenant colonels, colonels, brigadier generals and at last to major generals; he fixed their rank, regulated their command, and on some, I believe, he bestowed a pension. At this stage, I set him down for a commander-in-chief, and his next letter proved me prophetic. Mr. Plain Truth, in the course of his numerous encomiums on Mr. Deane, says, that—

"The letter of the Count de Vergennes, written by order of his Most Christian Majesty to Congress, speaking of Mr. Deane in the most honorable manner, and the letter from that Minister in his own character, written not in the language of a courtier, but in that of a person who felt what he expressed, would be sufficient to counterbalance, not only the opinions of the writer of the address to Mr. Deane, but even of characters of more influence, who may vainly endeavor to circulate notions of his insignificancy and unfitness for a public minister."

The supreme authority of one country, however different may be its mode, will ever pay a just regard to that of another, more especially when in alliance. But those letters can extend no further than to such parts of Mr. Deane's conduct as came under the immediate notice of the Court as a public Minister, or a political agent; and cannot be supposed to interfere with such other parts as might be disapproved in him here as a contractor or a com-

mercial agent, and can in no place be applied as an extenuation of any imprudence of his either there or since his return; besides which, letters of this kind, are as much intended to compliment the power that employs, as the person employed; and upon the whole, I fear Mr. Deane has presumed too much upon the polite friendship of that nation, and engrossed to himself, a regard, that was partly intended to express, through him, an affection to the continent.

Mr. Deane should likewise recollect that the early appearance of any gentleman from America, was a circumstance, so agreeable to the nation, he had the honor of appearing at, that he must have managed unwisely indeed to have avoided popularity. For as the poet says,

"Fame then was cheap, and the first comers sped."

The last line of the couplet is not applicable

"Which they have since preserved by being dead."

From the pathetic manner in which Mr. Deane speaks of his "*sufferings*" and the little concern he seems to have of ours, it may not be improper to inform him, that there is kept in this city a "*Book of Sufferings,*" into which, by the assistance of some of his connections, he may probably get them regis-

tered. I have not interest enough myself to afford him any service in this particular, though I am a friend to all religions, and no personal enemy to those who may, in this place, suppose themselves alluded to.

I can likewise explain to Mr. Deane, the reason of one of his sufferings which I know he has complained of. After the Declaration of Independence was passed, Mr. Deane thought it a great hardship that he was not authorized to announce it in form to the Court of France, and this circumstance has been mentioned as a seeming inattention in Congress. The reason of it was this, and I mention it from my own knowledge. Mr. Deane was at that time only a commercial agent, without any commission from Congress, and consequently could not appear at Court with the rank suitable to the formality of such an occasion. A new commission was therefore necessary to be issued by Congress, and that honor was purposely reserved for Doctor Franklin, whose long services in the world, and established reputation in Europe, rendered him the fittest person in America to execute such a great and original design; and it was likewise paying a just attention to the honor of France by sending so able and extraordinary a character to announce the Declaration.

Mr. Plain Truth, who sticks at nothing to carry Mr. Deane through everything thick or thin, says:

"It may not be improper to remark that when he (Mr. Deane) arrived in France, the opinion of people there, and in the different parts of Europe, not only with respect to the merits, but the probable issue of the contest, had by no means acquired that consistency which they had at the time of Dr. Franklin's and Mr. Arthur Lee's arrival in that kingdom."

Mr. Plain Truth is not a bad historian. For it was the fate of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee to arrive in France at the very worst of times. Their first appearance there was followed by a long series of ill fortune on our side. Doctor Franklin went from America in October, 1776, at which time our affairs were taking a wrong turn. The loss on Long Island, and the evacuation of New York happened before he went, and all the succeeding retreats and misfortunes through the course of that year, till the scale was again turned by taking the Hessians at Trenton on the 26th day of December, followed day by day after him. And I have been informed by a gentleman from France, that the philosophical ease and cheerful fortitude, with which Dr. Franklin heard of or announced those tidings, contributed greatly

towards lessening the real weight of them on the minds of the Europeans.

Mr. Deane speaking of himself in his address says, "*While it* was safe to be silent my lips were closed. Necessity hath opened them and necessity must excuse this effort to serve, by informing you." After which he goes on with his address. In this paragraph there is an insinuation thrown out by Mr. Deane that some treason was on foot, which he had happily discovered, and which his duty to his country compelled him to reveal. The public had a right to be alarmed, and the alarm was carefully kept by those who at first contrived it. Now, if after this, Mr. Deane has nothing to inform them of, he must sink into nothing. When a public man stakes his reputation in this manner he likewise stakes all his future credit on the performance of his obligation.

I am not writing to defend Mr. Arthur or Mr. William Lee, I leave their conduct to defend itself; and I would with as much freedom make an attack on either of these gentlemen, if there was a public necessity for it, as on Mr. Deane. In my address I mentioned Colonel R. H. Lee with some testimony of honorable respect, because I am personally acquainted with that gentleman's integrity and abilities as a public man, and in the circle of my acquaintance

I know but few that have equalled, and none that have exceeded him, particularly in his ardor to bring foreign affairs, and more especially the present happy alliance, to an issue.

I heard it mentioned of this gentleman, that he was among those, whose impatience for victory led them into some kind of discontent at the operations of last winter. The event has, I think, fully proved those gentlemen wrong, and must convince them of it; but I can see no reason why a misgrounded opinion, produced by an overheated anxiety for success, should be mixed up with other matters it has no concern with. A man's political abilities may be exceedingly good, though at the same time he may differ, and even be wrong, in his notions of some military particulars.

Mr. Deane says that Mr. Arthur Lee was dragged into a treaty with the utmost reluctance, a charge which if he cannot support, he must expect to answer for. I am acquainted that Mr. Lee had some objection against the constructions of a particular article [12th], which, I think, shows his judgment, and whenever they can be known will do him honor; but his general opinion of that valuable transaction I shall give in his own words from a letter in my hands.

"France has done us substantial benefits, Great Britain substantial injuries. France offers to guarantee our sovereignty, and universal freedom of commerce. Great Britain *condescends* to *accept* our *submission* and to *monopolize* our commerce. France demands of us to be independent, Great Britain tributary. I do not conceive how there can be a mind so debased, or an understanding so perverted, as to balance between them.

"The journeys I have made north and south in the public service, have given me opportunities of knowing the general disposition of Europe on our question. There never was one in which the harmony of opinion was so universal. From the prince to the peasant there is but one voice, one wish, the liberty of America and the humiliation of Great Britain."

If Mr. Deane was industrious to spread reports to the injury of these gentlemen in Europe, as he has been in America, no wonder that their real characters have been misunderstood. The peculiar talent which Mr. Deane possesses of attacking persons behind their backs has so near a resemblance to the author of Plain Truth, who after promising his name to the public has declined to give it, and some other proceedings I am not unacquainted with, *particularly an attempt to prevent my publications*, that it looks as if one spirit of private malevolence governed the whole.

Mr. Plain Truth has renewed the story of Dr. Birkenhout, to which I have but one reply to make:

why did not Mr. Deane appear against him while he was here? He was the only person who knew anything of him, and his neglecting to give information, and thereby suffering a suspicious person to escape for want of proof, is a story very much against Mr. Deane; and his complaining after the man was gone corresponds with the rest of his conduct.

When little circumstances are so easily dwelt upon, it is a sign not only of the want of great ones but of weakness and ill will. The crime against Mr. William Lee is, that some years ago he was elected an alderman of one of the wards in London, and the English calender has yet printed him with the same title. Is that any fault of his? Or can he be made accountable for what the people of London may do? Let us distinguish between whiggishness and waspishness, between patriotism and peevishness, otherwise we shall become the laughing stock of every sensible and candid mind. Suppose the Londoners should take it into their heads to elect the President of Congress or General Washington an alderman, is that a reason why we should displace them? But, Mr. Lee, say they, has not resigned. These men have no judgment, or they would not advance such positions. Mr. Lee has nothing to resign. He has vacated his aldermanship by accepting an appointment

under Congress, and can know nothing further of the matter. Were he to make a formal resignation it would imply his being a subject of Great Britain; besides which, the character of being an ambassador from the States of America, is so superior to that of any alderman of London, that I conceive Mr. Deane, or Mr. Plain Truth, or any other person, as doing a great injustice to the dignity of America by attempting to put the two in any disputable competition. Let us be honest lest we be despised, and generous lest we be laughed at.

Mr. Deane in his address of the 5th of December, says, "having thus introduced you to your great servants, I now proceed to make you acquainted with some other personages, which it may be of consequence for you to know. I am *sorry* to say, that Arthur Lee, Esq., was suspected by some of the best friends you had abroad, and those in important characters and stations." To which I reply, that I firmly believe Mr. Deane will *likewise* be sorry he has said it. Mr. Deane after thus advancing a charge endeavors to palliate it by saying, "these suspicions, *whether well* or *ill* founded, were frequently urged to Dr. Franklin and myself." But Mr. Deane ought to have been certain that they were *well founded,*

before he made such a publication, for if they are *not* well founded he must appear with great discredit, and it is now his duty to accuse Mr. Arthur Lee legally, and support the accusation with sufficient proofs. Characters are tender and valuable things; they are more than life to a man of sensibility, and are not to be made the sport of interest, or the sacrifice of incendiary malice. Mr. Lee is an absent gentleman, I believe too, an honest one, and my motive for publishing this is not to gratify any party or any person but as an act of social duty which one man owes to another, and which, I hope, will be done to me whenever I shall be accused ungenerously behind my back.

Mr. Lee to my knowledge has far excelled Mr. Deane in the usefulness of his information, respecting the political and military designs of the Court of London. While in London he conveyed intelligence that was dangerous to his personal safety. Many will remember the instance of the rifle man who had been carried prisoner to England alone three years ago, and who afterwards returned from thence to America, and brought with him a letter concealed in a button. That letter was from this gentleman, and the public will, I believe, conclude, that the hazard Mr. Lee

exposed himself to, in giving information while so situated, and by such means, deserves their regard and thanks. The detail of the number of the foreign and British troops for the campaign of 1776, came first from him, as did likewise the expedition against South Carolina and Canada, and among other accounts of his, that the English emissaries at Paris had boasted that the British Ministry had sent over half a million of guineas to corrupt the Congress. This money, should they be fools enough to send it, will be very ineffectually attempted or bestowed, for repeated instances have shown that the moment any man steps aside from the public interest of America, he becomes despised, and if in office, superseded.

Mr. Deane says, "that Dr. Birkenhout, when he returned to New York, ventured to assure the British Commissioners, that by the alliance with France, America was at liberty to make peace without consulting her ally, unless England declared war." What is it to us what Dr. Birkenhout said, or how came Mr. Deane to know what passed between him and the British Commissioners? But I ask Mr. Deane's pardon, he has told us how. "Providence, (says he) in whom we put our trust, *unfolded* it to me." But Mr. Deane says, that Colonel R. H. Lee, pertina-

ciously maintained the same doctrine. The treaty of alliance will neither admit of debate nor any equivocal explanation. Had *war not broken out,* or *had not Great Britain, in resentment to that alliance or connection, and of the good correspondence which is the object of the said treaty, broken the peace with France, either by direct hostilities or by hindering her commerce and navigation in a manner contrary to the rights of nations, and the peace subsisting at that time, between the two Crowns,*—in this case, I likewise say, that America as a *matter of right,* could have made a peace without consulting her ally, though the civil obligations of mutual esteem and friendship would have required such a consultation. But war *has* broken out, though not declared, for the first article in the treaty of alliance is confined to the *breaking out of war,* and *not* to its *declaration.* Hostilities have been commenced; therefore the first case is superseded, and the eighth article of the treaty of alliance has its full intentional force: "*Article 8.*—Neither of the two parties shall conclude either truce or peace without the formal consent of the other first obtained, and they mutually engage not to lay down their arms until the independence of the United States, shall have been formally or tacitly assured, by the treaty or treaties that shall terminate that war."

What Mr. Deane means by this affected appearance of his, both personally and in print, I am quite at a loss to understand. He seems to conduct himself here in a style, that would more properly become the secretary to a foreign embassy, than that of an American Minister returned from his charge. He appears to be everybody's servant but ours, and for that reason can never be the proper person to execute any commission, or possess our confidence. Among the number of his "*sufferings*" I am told that he returned burdened with forty changes of silk, velvet, and other dresses. Perhaps this was the reason he could not bring his papers.

Mr. Deane says, that William Lee, Esq., gives five per cent commission, and receives a share of it, for what was formerly done for two per cent. That matter requires to be cleared up and explained; for it is not the quantity per cent, but the purposes to which it is applied that makes it right or wrong; besides which, the whole matter, like many other of Mr. Deane's charges, may be groundless.

I here take my leave of this gentleman, wishing him more discretion, candour and generosity.

In the beginning of this address I informed the public, that "whatever I should conceive necessary to

say of myself, would appear in the conclusion." I chose that mode of arrangement, lest by explaining my own situation first, the public might be induced to pay a greater regard to what I had to say against Mr. Deane, than was necessary they should; whereas it was my wish to give Mr. Deane every advantage, by letting what I had to advance come from me, while I laid under the disadvantage of having the motives of my conduct mistaken by the public. Mr. Deane and his adherents have apparently deserted the field they first took possession of and seemed to triumph in. They made their appeal to you, yet have suffered me to accuse and expose them for almost three weeks past, without a denial or a reply.

I do not blame the public for censuring me while they, though wrongfully, supposed I deserved it. When they see their mistake, I have no doubt, but they will honor me with that regard of theirs which I before enjoyed. And considering how much I have been misrepresented, I hope it will not now appear ostentatious in me, if I set forth what has been my conduct, ever since the first publication of the pamphlet Common Sense down to this day, on which, and on account of my reply to Mr. Deane, and in order to import the liberty of the press, and my right as a free-

man, I have been obliged to resign my office of Secretary for foreign affairs, which I held under Congress. But this, in order to be complete, will be published in the Crisis No. 8, of which notice will be given in the papers.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, January 8, 1779.

MESSRS. DEANE, JAY AND GERARD.

THESE concluding remarks by Paine on the celebrated Deane affair appeared in the form of a letter to the editor, named Dunlap, of the "Pennsylvania Packet," in which it was published September 14, 1779. Paine, in denouncing Deane, had stirred up a hornet's nest not only in America, but in France. M. Gerard, the French Minister to the United States, was interested in the Deane-Beaumarchais claims, and complained to Congress about Paine's disclosures. Incidentally, Paine, who here recites his repeated refusal to dine with Gerard while the matter was pending in Congress, did not know that the French diplomat was personally interested in having the claims settled.

On Congress refusing to receive and hear him on the floor, Paine resigned his Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs, and John Jay, President of Congress, wrote an effusive and apologetic letter to Gerard. Congress knew that Paine had written the truth, but was obliged for diplomatic reasons, as Gouverneur Morris said, "to act as if they believed otherwise."

IN your paper of August 31st was published an extract of a letter from Paris, dated May the 21st, in which the writer, among other things, says:

"It is long since I felt in common with every other well-wisher to the cause of liberty and truth, the obligations I was under to the author of "Common Sense," for the able and unanswerable manner in which he has defended those principles. The same public motives I am persuaded induced him to address the public against Mr. Deane and his associates. The countenance and support which Deane has received is a melancholy presage of the future. Vain, assuming, avaricious and unprincipled, he will stick at no crime to cover what he has committed and continue his career. The impunity with which Deane has traduced and calumniated Congress to their face, the indulgence and

even countenance he has received, the acrimonious and uncandid spirit of a letter containing Mr. Paine's publications which accompanied a resolve sent to Mr. Gerard, are matters of deep concern here to every friend to America."

By way of explaining the particular letter referred to in the above, the following note was added:

"The letter here alluded to can be no other than that signed '*John Jay*,' dated January 13th, and published in Mr. Dunlap's paper of Jan. 16th. It is very extraordinary that Mr. Jay should write such a letter, because it contains the same illiberal reflections which Congress, as a body, had rejected from their resolve of January 12, as may be seen by any one who will peruse the proceedings of January last. Congress has since declined to give countenance to Mr. Jay's letter; for though he had a public authority for writing *a letter* to Mr. Gerard, he had no authority for the reflections he used; besides which, the letter would be perfectly laughable were every circumstance known which happened at that particular time, and would likewise show how exceedingly delicate and cautious a President ought to be when he means to act officially in cases he is not sufficiently acquainted with."

Every person will perceive that the note which explains the letter referred to, is not a part of the letter from Paris, but is added by another person; and Mr. Jay, or any other gentleman, is welcome to know that the note is in my writing, and that the original letter from Paris is now in my possession.

I had sufficient authority for the expressions used in the note. Mr. Jay did not lay his letter to Mr. Gerard before Congress previous to sending it, and therefore, though he had their order, he had not their approbation. They, it is true, ordered it to be published, but there is no vote for approving it, neither have they given it a place in their Journals, nor was it published in any more than one paper in this city (Benjamin Towne's), though there were at that time two others. Some time after Mr. Jay's letter appeared in the paper, I addressed another to Congress, complaining of the unjust liberty he had taken, and desired to know whether I was to consider the expressions used in his letter as containing *their* sentiments, at the same time informing them that if they declined to prove what he had written I should consider their silence as a disapprobation of it. Congress chose to be silent; and consequently, have left Mr. Jay to father his own expressions.

I took no other notice of Mr. Jay's letter at the time it was published, being fully persuaded that when any man recollected the part I had acted, not only at the first but in the worst of times, he could but look on Mr. Jay's letter to be groundless and ungrateful, and the more so, because if America had had no better friends than himself to bring about

independence, I fully believe she would never have succeeded in it, and in all probability been a ruined, conquered and tributary country.

Let any man look at the position America was in at the time I first took up the subject, and published "Common Sense," which was but a few months before the Declaration of Independence; an army of thirty thousand men coming out against her, besides those which were already here, and she without either an object or a system; fighting, she scarcely knew for what, and which, if she could have obtained, would have done her no good. She had not a day to spare in bringing about the only thing which could save her. A REVOLUTION, yet no one measure was taken to promote it, and many were used to prevent it; and had independence not been declared at the time it was, I cannot see any time in which it could have been declared, as the train of ill-successes which followed the affair of Long Island left no future opportunity.

Had I been disposed to have made money, I undoubtedly had many opportunities for it. The single pamphlet "Common Sense," would at that time of day have produced a tolerable fortune, had I only taken the same profits from the publication which all writers had ever done, because the sale was the

the most rapid and extensive of any thing that was ever published in this country, or perhaps any other. Instead of which I reduced the price so low, that instead of getting, I yet stand thirty-nine pounds eleven shillings out of pocket on Mr. Bradford's books, exclusive of my time and trouble, and I have acted the same disinterested part by every publication I have made. I could have mentioned those things long ago, had I chosen, but I mention them now to make Mr. Jay feel his ingratitude.

In the *Pennsylvania Packet* of last Tuesday some person has republished Mr. Jay's letter, and Mr. Gerard's answer of the 13th and 14th January last, and though I was patiently silent upon their first publication, I now think it necessary, since they are republished, to give some circumstances which ought to go with them.

At the time the dispute arose, respecting Mr. Deane's affairs, I had a conference with Mr. Gerard at his own request, and some matters on that subject were freely talked over, which it it here unnecessary to mention. This was on the 2d of January.

On the evening of the same day, or the next, Mr. Gerard, through the mediation of another gentleman, made me a very genteel and profitable offer. I felt at once the respect due to his friendship, and the

difficulties which my acceptance would subject me to. My whole credit was staked upon going through with Deane's affairs, and could I afterwards have written with the pen of an angel, on any subject whatever, it would have had no effect, had I failed in that or declined proceeding in it. Mr. Deane's name was not mentioned at the time the offer was made, but from some conversation which passed at the time of the interview, I had sufficient reason to believe that some restraint had been laid on that subject. Besides which I have a natural inflexible objection to any thing which may be construed into a private pension, because a man after that is no longer truly free.

My answer to the offer was precisely in these words—"Any service I can render to either of the countries in alliance, or to both, I ever have done and shall readily do, and Mr. Gerard's *esteem* will be the only recompense I shall desire." I particularly chose the word *esteem* because it admitted no misunderstanding.

On the fifth of January I published a continuation of my remarks on Mr. Deane's affairs, and I have ever felt the highest respect for a nation which has in every stage of our affairs been our firm and invariable friend. I spoke of France under that general description. It is true I prosecuted the point against

Mr. Deane, but what was Mr. Deane to France, or to the Minister of France?

On the appearance of this publication Mr. Gerard presented a memorial to Congress respecting some expressions used therein, and on the 6th and 7th I requested of Congress to be admitted to explain any passages which Mr. Gerard had referred to; but this request not being complied with, I, on the 8th, sent in my resignations of the office of Secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs.

In the evening I received an invitation to sup with a gentleman, and Mr. Gerard's offer was, by his own authority, again renewed with considerable additions of advantage. I gave the same answer as before. I was then told that Mr. Gerard was very ill, and desired to see me. I replied, "That as a matter was then depending in Congress upon a representation of Mr. Gerard against some parts of my publications, I though it indelicate to wait on him till that was determined."

In a few days after I received a second invitation, and likewise a third, to sup at the same place, in both of which the same offer and the same invitation were renewed and the same answers on my part were given: But being repeatedly pressed to make Mr. Gerard a visit, I engaged to do it the next morning at ten

o'clock: but as I considered myself standing on a nice and critical ground, and lest my reputation should be afterwards called in question, I judged it best to communicate the whole matter to an honorable friend before I went, which was on the 14th of January, the very day on which Mr. Gerard's answer to Mr. Jay's letter is dated.

While with Mr. Gerard I avoided as much as possible every occasion that might give rise to the subject. Himself once or twice hinted at the publications and added that, "he hoped no more would be said on the subject," which I immediately waived by entering on the loss of the dispatchces. I knew my own resolution respecting the offer, had communicated that resolution to a friend, and did not wish to give the least pain to Mr. Gerard, by personally refusing that, which, from him might be friendship, but to me would have been the ruin of my credit. At a convenient opportunity I rose to take my leave, on which Mr. Gerard said: "Mr. Paine, I have always had a great respect for you, and should be glad of some opportunity of showing you more solid marks of my friendship."

I confess I felt myself hurt and exceedingly concerned that the injustice and indiscretion of a party in Congress should drive matters to such an extremity

that one side or other must go to the bottom, and in its consequences embarrass those whom they had drawn in to support them. I am conscious that America had not in France a more strenuous friend than Mr. Gerard, and I sincerely wish he had found a way to avoid an affair which has been much trouble to him. As for Deane, I believe him to be a man who cares not whom he involves to screen himself. He has forfeited all reputation in this country, first by promising to give an "*history of matters important for the people to know*" and then not only failing to perform that promise, but neglecting to clear his own suspected reputation, though he is now on the spot and can any day demand a hearing of Congress, and call me before them for the truth of what I have published respecting him.

Two days after my visit to Mr. Gerard, Mr. Jay's letter and the answer to it was published, and I would candidly ask any man how it is possible to reconcile such letters to such offers both done at one and the same time, and whether I had not sufficient authority to say that Mr. Jay's letter would be truly laughable, were all the circumstances known which happened at the time of his writing.

Whoever published those letters in last Tuesday's paper, must be an idiot or worse. I had let them

pass over without any other public notice than what was contained in the note of the preceding week, but the republishing them was putting me to defiance, and forcing me either to submit to them afresh, or to give the circumstances which accompanied them. Whoever will look back to last winter, must see I had my hands full, and that without any person giving the least assistance. It was first given out that I was paid by Congress for vindicating their reputation against Mr. Deane's charges, yet a majority in that House were every day pelting me for what I was doing. Then Mr. Gerard was unfortunately brought in, and Mr. Jay's letter to him and his answer were published to effect some purpose or other. Yet Mr. Gerard was at the same time making the warmest professions of friendship to me, and proposing to take me into his confidence with very liberal offers. In short I had but one way to get through, which was to keep close to the point and principle I set out upon, and that alone has rendered me successful. By making this my guide I have kept my ground, and I have yet ground to spare, for among other things I have authentic copies of the dispatches that were lost.

I am certain no man set out with a warmer heart or a better disposition to render public service than

myself, in everything which lay in my power.[1] My first endeavor was to put the politics of the country right, and to show the advantages as well as the necessity of independence: and until this was done, independence never could have succeeded. America did not at that time understand her own situation; and though the country was then full of writers, no one reached the mark; neither did I abate in my service, when hundreds were afterwards deserting her interest and thousands afraid to speak, for the first number of the "Crisis" was published in the blackest stage of affairs, six days before the taking the Hessians at Trenton. When this State was distracted by parties on account of her Constitution, I endeavored in the most disinterested manner to bring it to a conclusion; and when Deane's impositions broke out, and threw the whole States into confusion, I readily took up the subject, for no one else understood it, and the country now sees that I was right. And if Mr. Jay thinks he derives any credit from his letter to Mr. Gerard, he will find himself deceived, and that the ingratitude of the composition will be his reproach, not mine.

COMMON SENSE.

[1] The entire Deane-Beaumarchais-Gerard matter is considered at some length in Vol. I of this set, the Paine biography.—*Editor.*

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